

THE
ANCIENT QUEST

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

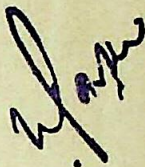
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This small book is a selection of twelve lectures by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

These lectures were delivered during the years, 1893-1911, and appeared previously either in the pages of 'The Brahmavadin', 'The Prabuddha Bharata', 'The Message of the East' or 'The Vedanta Kesari'. This is the first time they are published in a book form.

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WHO AM I ?

IT IS the easiest of all the questions to ask, but the most difficult to answer. Almost all men of the world do not seriously require any further answer to this than that they are Mr. So-and-So, Brahmanas, or non-Brahmanas, Hindus or Mahomedans or Christians, dark or fair, wealthy or poor, and so on; and their mind is quite satisfied with the answer. To all practical purposes they are materialists although some of them may profess that they are some conscious entity other than this mere lump of flesh called body. Their consciousness of 'I' is never free from the shackle of matter, their ego being inextricably intertwined with flesh. But there come moments in the life of all, more or less, when a word, a suggestion, a glimpse revealed per chance, makes the mind soar up like Shelley's Skylark—

“ Higher still and higher
From the earth.....”

and perceive the moving images of matter like so many distant passing shadows growing indistincter every moment, while itself is bathed with a serener light unseen, unfelt before. When man comes down from such a mood into the ordinary consciousness of humdrum life, the first feeling that irresistibly arises within his heart

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interrogates "Is our present consciousness real?" But, the inertia of his usual life does not allow him to stand long in that questioning mood, it draws a curtain immediately over the after-glow of that precious moment's experience and makes the mind move in the old rut again,—the man begins to dream once more the dream of physical life owning fully the pain and pleasure, joys and sorrows of his bodily existence.

The dictum 'know thyself' is the dictum of necessity of man. Man, in the morning hours of his evolutionary career, bristling still with the instincts of brute-life, places all his interests and concerns in the physical plane; he draws all his life's joys and sorrows from the mere material objects.

At first he thinks he is happy with his course, but soon he comes to realise that to be happy he must have more and more than what he presently possesses, as he feels an unintermitted flow of thirst for more is ever-welling up from within. The spur of want drives him on and on in that mad race: he brings all his physical and intellectual power to bear upon the point, contriving all sorts of means to gratify his ever-increasing desires. But when the long weary race is run enough to fatigue the labouring man, he wakes up at last to the fact that "The flame of desire is never extinguished by its enjoyment; it increases with the enjoyment, as fire flares up the more, the more *ghee* is poured into it."

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But still he feels the gnawing pain of want;—although a change has come in its mode,—first it was in the form of hankering for happiness, but now it has changed into the thirst for peace. The labourer after day's fatiguing toil wishes no more the wearisome mirth of revelry, but is seeking the calm oblivion of his physical life in sweet repose. Peace, the delightful joy born of the harmony of life, the sweet felicity that comes after the cessation of senses' 'ignoble strife.' Ah! where can it be had? In the same senses? Oh! no, experiences tell that they produce intoxication and fever that leave behind only ailing prostration. Then, can it come when all the clamours of the senses are quelled? Perhaps, an effort is being made to stop the sense for a while from responding to the external stimuli; the mind becomes a little introspective and finds a slight peace in it, but still is there the harrowing concourse of previous sense-impressions, pressing hard to break out into riotous activity again. So an attempt is next made to purge the mind of those impressions, or at least to drive them down to subconscious plane. In so attempting, when a certain degree of mental quietude is reached,—the mind becoming empty, as it were, to a certain extent—there comes all on a sudden a flash, a flash of *Chit*, revealing the true nature of man, and along with it the man also tastes a kind of bliss the like of which he never experienced before, compared with which all the enjoyments

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of his previous life appear so mean, so vulgar, a drop in the ocean. A complete metamorphosis ensues next in his inner life; the centre of consciousness is shifted from the body and mind to something that transcends both yet forms their background. The ego discarding the concrete name and form (*Nama* and *Rupa*) tends to sublimate into the etherial purity of the absolute. And finally, the grain is sifted completely from the chaff,—the soul stands out in its own absolute nature, quite apart from all the modifications of body and even of mind. Man finds then there is no 'I' or 'Thou' in him, he is the immutable, eternal, uncreated ocean of consciousness—absolute, rolling from eternity to eternity; no space or time element is there to modify him; he is the uncaused cause of the dreams of life, yet untarnished by the dreams; he is the ever pure immortal *Atman*. The moment this real nature of the self is realised, all misery ceases, all want vanishes, all fear disappears; the man feels he has nothing to achieve, he has attained the highest,—he has attained the eternal undying *peace*.

WHAT IS THE SOUL ?

THERE are many who claim that the universe is never really destroyed. Just as through the day many objects are visible, but on a dark night although they are still there, they cannot be seen; so *Pralaya* or dissolution, some say, is like that. The universe is still there, but cannot be perceived. Matter is indestructible. Forms come and forms go, but that which is behind all forms is indestructible, and that indestructible substance is called matter. Now there is a meeting here. It began at seven-thirty and will break up at eight-thirty; then the meeting will disappear, but those who formed the meeting will not vanish. In the same way the objects which constitute the universe may come and go, but that which makes up these objects does not go. For this reason forms are never real. Hence from this we learn that that which has a form, as a form, is not real. Only the formless can be real. A form, according to Geometry, is that which is bounded by lines; only that which is not bounded by lines, therefore, can be real, and that must be the infinite. Therefore the infinite alone is real and the infinite is God, hence God is the only reality.

The same reasoning applies to the human being. The Self which dwells in the body is not the body, so the

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boundary line of the body is not its boundary line. Yet it is true that every part of this body is animated by the Self. If I touch your arm, I touch you, which shows that you are everywhere in the body. But although the Self or Soul is inside, it is not confined by the body. Now let us find out your boundary line. Your body exists, your mind exists and you exist. These three make up you,—body, mind and Self. But although you are connected with the body, yet every moment you prove that you are not the body, that it is merely something which you train and direct; therefore what is true of the body need not be true of you. Next, what is the mind? The mind is that which thinks, remembers and desires. So long as you have not arrived at a definite knowledge about a thing you keep on questioning and thinking. So thinking is the outcome of doubt. But Soul can have no doubt. It knows everything. Hence Soul or the Real Self within you is that which does not think; it is also that which does not will; for only he who doubts thinks and only he who desires wills. He who is perfectly rich desires nothing. Willing is based on desire, which comes from a sense of incompleteness, a lack somewhere. The Soul is free from self-will because it is wantless; and that which has no want is perfect, therefore the soul being free from want must be perfect.

Soul again can have no emotions. It has no anger, no pleasure or pain; for all these emotions create unrest

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and the Soul is absolutely calm. There is no wave in it. Emotion is a sign of weakness rather than of strength, for when an emotion agitates the mind it shows that the feeling is stronger than the mind and so overcomes it. But there is no feeling stronger than the Soul, hence it is never agitated. As Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita, it is like the ocean into which many streams and rivers enter and are lost, but it maintains its steady level. That undisturbed being goes by the name of Soul. You may add to it or take away from it, yet you can never increase or diminish it.

Thus studying body and mind, we see that they are limited ; but Soul being different from body and mind, is unlimited. The body is born and grows. The mind, too, grows ; the man's mind is not like the boy's mind. So body has growth and mind has growth ; but this does not indicate greatness, it rather indicates weakness, because it shows them to be incomplete. But the Soul is that which never grows. It never changes. The boy at the high school is quite different from the baby in arms : the same body is not there, nor the same mind, but the same person is there. This proves to us that the Soul does not change. It is always the same. Therefore you must know that in your true nature you have no growth and if you do not grow, you do not change ; and if you do not change, you must be all-full, all-perfect ; and if you are all-perfect, you must be infinite.

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It is that Self in you that knows. Do the eyes know anything or the ears? Does even the mind know anything? No, only when you come does this organism begin to perceive, will and remember. Mind can know only when you are there. The power of knowing is innate in you, it is not something you acquire; consciousness and you are synonymous. You are made up of consciousness. When this consciousness stands behind the mind as the astronomer behind the telescope, then it begins to know. Your eyes cannot see any more than the telescope sees the stars; nor can your ears hear, your tongue taste or your mind think. Being conscious also, you must be infinitely conscious, for consciousness is formless and hence is infinite. And if you are infinitely conscious, you must be infinitely powerful. Nothing can overwhelm you. Food changes your body; what you hear and learn changes your mind; but nothing can change you. You are the changeless and hence eternally calm. Also you must be birthless and deathless. But that which is formless, changeless, birthless and deathless is what is called Truth, so the Soul is Truth. The Soul again is eternal, peaceful, all-blissful, all-knowing; but this is what God is, and as things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, the Soul must be of like nature with God and one with Him. This is why the great Vedic Sages declare: "*Aham Brahmasmi*", "I am Brahman or one with the Absolute."

WHAT IS THE SOUL ?

But who are you? "I" is the label of this bodily manifestation. It is born with body and dies with body. But we know that when this body is worn out, there is something in the body which does not die; and that principle within is called the *Jivatman* or individual soul. Body, mind and ego make up man; mind and ego make up the *Jivatman*. *Jivatman* is that which existed prior to this present body and will exist after this body, but always in connection with a body, either gross or subtle. It is constantly developing; with each body it may get different experiences. It leaves one body and goes to another, therefore it has motion; but the *Paramatman* or Supreme Self of man has no motion. It is changeless and infinite; and being infinite it must be one. *Jivatmans* are innumerable and their life is unlimited; *Ahamkaras* or egos are also innumerable, but they die; while the *Paramatman* is one and deathless. *Ahamkaras* are many, *Jivatmans* are many, but *Paramatman* is one. It is the centre of the circle; and as there are many radii which meet in one centre, so while as radii we are many, we are all one in the centre, the *Paramatman*.

This *Paramatman* or Supreme Self seems to be occupying this body, but in reality He is occupying all bodies. He is everywhere. And how can we know Him? By going into our own Soul. We can find Him when the fire of wisdom has burnt up the dross and separated the real from the unreal in us. This

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Paramatman is Truth, and all power is in Truth. Whatever goes away from Truth must perish; so falsehood has no hope, while Truth is life itself. It is always perfect. Therefore our first duty should be to unite ourselves with Truth by clearly understanding that from Truth we have come and not from falsehood. Blessed are they who realise that they have come out of Truth, in Truth they live and into Truth they will merge. And unfortunate are they who believe that out of matter they have come and that it is this world which gives them life. They are thirsting for life and courting death; they are seeking misery, imagining it to be happiness; they are drinking poison and taking it for nectar.

THE TRUE SELF OF MAN

WHEN all the desires that live in the mind are given up, then the man is said to be of steady wisdom. And at that time he lives perfectly satisfied within himself. Desires reside in the mind and not in the soul; so Sri Krishna says that when a man gives up the desires that live in the mind he attains wisdom. The mind is always restless, restless because of these desires. When it gets rid of all desires, then alone the Self can be realised. The mind has been compared to the surface of a lake. If the surface is disturbed by waves and ripples, the trees and clouds and other objects are imperfectly reflected; but if the surface is calm and clear, then every object is distinctly mirrored on it. Similarly when the surface of the mind is calm and clear, the Self is perfectly reflected. You stand beside a lake. If the waters are stirred by the wind, you do not see your true image—it is distorted and broken in outline. In the same way, if the mind is ruffled, it gives only a false and vague picture of the Self. When, however, all desires have left it, when it becomes calm, the true Self will be clearly seen and you will know your own glory. At that time you will see that you cannot die, cannot be overpowered by ignorance; that you are naturally *Satchidanandam* eternally existent, all-knowing and blissful.

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Desires cannot exist in the Self, for it is full and complete. Desire means want. We are hungry because we need food ; we are thirsty because we want water. But the self needs nothing, so it is wantless and therefore has no desire.

What is mind? Mind is one with me but it is not I. Mind is the root of all the senses. The senses and organs of action are only able to work through the mind. It is the instrument by the help of which the Soul is able to gather up all experiences, is able to think and will and feel. This is the function of the mind. If we analyse our desires, we shall find that they are all in the mind. Desires are of two kinds,—desires to avoid, desires to acquire. A man desires to avoid what does not harmonize with his mind, and to acquire that which does harmonize. Then all pleasurable and painful experiences come from the mind. Without the mind there could be no desire, because the mind brings the self in contact with the world. Desire always implies an object. It is a transitive verb. A man always desires something and something which is to be found in the world. So all desires arise, not in the Soul, but in the world and in the mind.

So long as a man cannot separate himself from his body and mind, so long he does not know the art of drawing himself from these, he will have to be restless and to suffer ; for his desires will increase more and

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more as he satisfies them. By satisfaction of desire no man has ever been able to quench them. The more he yields to them, the more they will burn him. So, only one who knows the secret of separating himself from mind and body and thus getting rid of all desires, can be called a truly wise man. It is our daily experience that when we fall asleep, at that moment we go away from body and mind; we forget who we are, who our father is, where we live. But are we dissociated from all that belongs to us in the world? How is it? We are still in the body. We have not left it; yet we do not see or hear. The body is like a very big building. If the owner sleeps near the gate, he hears the least cry, but if he is in a distant corner, he does not hear unless the call is very loud. So when a man sleeps soundly, he goes far from the gateways of the senses; he also goes far from the inner gateway of the mind, and if you want him, you must give a loud call. Yet he is always there. He has not left this house of the body. Thus we learn from sleep that soul is distinct from body and mind. When the man sleeps he does not die. He has only gone far inside himself, beyond the senses, even beyond the mind, because if he were still in mind he would remember, feel and think. If we analyse a man in sleep, we can say that he is not in the legs, he is not in the arms, not in the brain or in the senses. Yet he must be somewhere inside. It is said that he is in the heart; and the brain

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the muscles, and the whole organism is still under his command. When he leaves the body all action ceases. If the brain is injured, the man may live for sometime in a demented condition ; but if the heart is injured even a little, the life stops at once, because it is the centre of life.

If desires are in the mind and not in the soul, the soul is wantless, calm and perfect. Because it is perfect, it must be full, complete. Everyone longs to be perfect and complete. Who of us does not wish to be rich ? Why ? Because we think that we shall be free from want. But ask a rich man if he has wants. You will find that he has many. The richer the man the more wants he has and the poorer he is, because want means poverty. So when you find that wealth brings more wants, you say, "This is not the path" ; and you try some other. In this way, you learn at last that perfection is no where outside. You are the perfect being. Perfection is within you. That is the reason you could not find it outside yourself.

But who is it that is searching ? Who is this "I" ? Is it the "I" who hungers, thirsts, who has so many imperfections in it ? Who is this "I" ? And who is that "I" who is full and perfect ? Man wants to be happy. But this want is not in the Self, because It is happiness itself. The ordinary man wants to be wise ; but there is no such want in the Self, because It is wisdom itself.

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Hence this "I" who hungers and thirsts cannot be the Self. But the great ones say, "Thou art that." What do they mean? How can this weak man who is a Hindu or a Christian, who needs food and drink, who suffers and enjoys, how can he be that Perfect One? Yet the Vedas say this "I" is that. Do the Vedas commit a blunder? No; we must not misunderstand their meaning. They do not mean that this weak, forlorn, ephemeral being known as Mr. So-and-So is that perfect, infinite One. A Hindu may have committed a murder and in order to escape he disguises himself as a foreigner; but he is caught and brought up before the court. He is not dressed like the man who committed the murder, he has not the same name, and there are many other differences. But the detective sees that the cut of the features, the height, the manner, resemble those of the murderer; so he overlooks the dissimilarities and dwells on the points of similarity, and by this means he is able to find out that this is the man who committed the murder. We must do in the same way. Of course the finite cannot resemble the infinite. Here I am garbed in finite dress, God is garbed in an infinite dress; so we must throw out the dress and dwell on points of resemblance. I am conscious and He is conscious. I am distinguished from the universe around me because I have the power to know; therefore I differ more from the universe than from Him, because I am conscious.

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Overlooking the dissimilarities in dress therefore, I see that we are alike in being conscious ; hence we must be one in consciousness, because there is only one consciousness.

Can a beautiful dead body, in which a man or woman lived a few hours ago, can it see or hear? No. Why? Because it is not conscious. So consciousness is different from seeing and hearing. It is the basis of all sense-perception. Consciousness enables me to see and hear ; and this power of consciousness in me is the same as the power of consciousness in you. Sights may be many, sounds may be many, but the consciousness which enables us to see and hear cannot be differentiated. It is always the same, just as gold cannot be distinguished from gold. Wherever there is consciousness there will be united action. That is the nature of consciousness. Consciousness is that power with the help of which the eyes are able to see, the ears to hear, the tongue to taste ; not any special eyes or ears or tongue, but all eyes and ears and tongues throughout the universe. Hence if you know one part of consciousness, you know all. But the desires which arise from sights, sounds, taste, touch, *etc.* have nothing to do with consciousness.

The moment I shall be deprived of this consciousness I shall fall down dead. The instant it leaves me, I shall cease to be. I only live because I am conscious. But as Mr. So-and-So I am not always conscious. When I fall

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asleep I forget completely whether I am a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin ; So at that time Mr. So-and-So has gone to sleep. But there is undoubtedly an inner consciousness that does not sleep, because when we wake up, we remember that we have existed before. And remembering means that while we are asleep we were experiencing what we are now remembering. Memory is based upon past experience ; so if we remember that we have been asleep, we must have experienced sleep. Who is this that experiences ? It is not this outer self, who thinks itself a Brahmin or non-Brahmin, a man or a woman, old or young, because at that time the sleeper did not know what his form or condition was. But he remembers that he has been asleep. That which remembers is not this "I," but that consciousness which is above this formful condition. It is that universal, formless consciousness which is one with the infinite, universal consciousness.

In this way we must reason and understand that when the Vedas Say "I am That," they do not mean this ephemeral self is That—not the part which is a Hindu, because in the next life this same one may be a Christian. This is not That. But behind this fleeting ephemeral self is a permanent self which is one without a second. The ocean is one. On the surface innumerable waves and ripples and bubbles play, but beneath them lies one vast body of water. Similarly there may be many

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ripples of consciousness, many bubbles, many waves of consciousness, but take away these ripples, waves and bubbles, and you will find one changeless consciousness. What is this ripple, wave, bubble side of me ? This little self, this little Mr. So-and-So, this Brahmin. But take away these and I am one calm, universal eternal Self. Beyond all these that Self abides. On this eternal Self rise the bubbles of ephemeral existence ; but beyond dwells the indestructible, unchangeable One.

Where can rest be found so long as the eternal wind of desire is blowing, stirring up froth and bubbles and waves on the surface of the mind ? Whoever will seek to find rest, peace, calmness in this ever changing world is a mad-man. If you want to realise perfection, it is somewhere else. There are no ripples or bubbles in your eternal Self. God, the all-wise, all-perfect Being has been described as consciousness ; He is not dead, life-less matter. Consciousness must be searched in consciousness, just as you must seek darkness in darkness, light in light. If therefore you want to realise the all-conscious Being, if you want to find your Beloved, you must search in your consciousness. If you wish to realise God, you must go deeper and deeper within. Only there will you find Him. Blessed is the man who has learnt this secret ! Inside this self of mine is the True Self to be found. Not outside. It is foolishness to search for Him elsewhere than in consciousness. You must seek

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being in being, life in life. This is the temple of God. You must take the suggestion from the outer temples and search for God in the innermost shrine. Wise men of the past realised this and built these outer temples to show man how he must go from enclosure to enclosure of organism, until in the innermost shrine he will find God seated. But to reach that shrine you must pass beyond all the outer courts.

Suppose there is a wall with many things hanging on it. If you give up the wall, then you will have to give up everything on it. This body is like such a wall. But the moment you are able to give it up—that is, give up all attachment to it—you will give up all that is resting or hanging on it. Now what are the things on this wall? These two eyes are the two nails on which all forms are hanging; these two ears are the nails on which all sounds are hanging; this tongue is the nail on which all tastes are hanging; and so with all the sense organs and organs of action. Therefore to give up the body means giving up all these. To give up the mind means, to give up memory or the record of past experience—that is you will give up one small family, one country, name, one special caste or creed. This is how at last the man sees nothing but his Self. The moment that he gives up body and mind, he will also give up the world. When body, mind and world are given up, what is there? The One Eternal Self.

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Have you lost something? No, you have lost nothing. Yes; you have lost all worries, troubles and anxieties. And what have you gained? You have realised all that you have been so long searching for. You have realised happiness. You have realised peace. You have realised power, you have realised freedom. You have gained all the things for which you have been struggling from time without beginning. So your fruitless attempts through all your races of many lives, attempts which have been like those of a man journeying to touch the horizon or to find a mirage, have now borne fruit. You have touched the horizon. You wanted to be all-powerful; here you are all-powerful. You wanted to be calm and peaceful; here is calmness and peace for you. You wanted to know all, and you have become all-knowing. Thus you have got all that for which you have been struggling.

When a man has thus realised that ignorance has nothing to do with him, that misfortune has nothing to do with him; when he has realised his true nature and knows that he is all-perfect, all-powerful, that misery or ignorance has no power to approach him, then nothing can touch his purity, his perfection, and wherever he goes he is happy. Then he does not talk much. Why do we talk? We talk to learn. But he has nothing to learn, so he has no need to talk, and he therefore becomes a *mini* or silent one. If he talks:

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at all, he says a few words merely to teach and help others. Nothing will ever be able to ruffle his mind. He may have to drudge under a hard master, or he may be placed on a splendid throne, but he remains unmoved, because he knows that—compared to that Light this sun is but a flickering flame, compared to that Bliss these fleeting pleasures are as foolishness. Just as a farthing has no attraction for a millionaire, to him it is as nothing, so the things of this world are as nothing to such a man ; for he has found within himself an inexhaustible treasure, the treasure of eternal life, of infinite knowledge and unending bliss.

MAN, THE BEGGAR ?

MAN is restless; not only man, but every living being throughout the universe is restless. Why? Because man is hungry and thirsty by nature and must have to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. That is why he is restless. If however you examine properly, you will be able to make out that hunger and thirst are not the direct cause of this restlessness. Man thinks that he is a person of innumerable wants. But that is only imagination. In reality he is wantless, infinite; that is his true nature. Yet he imagines that he wants food, that he wants drink and all the things that make up this universe. Hence this universe is called *Annam*. *Annam* ordinarily means food for the stomach. But this is not the only hunger that a man feels. He wants food for his eyes, he wants food for his tongue, food for all organs of the body in which he resides.

Hunger therefore means want of food, want of anything. And it has been calculated that a man has thirty-three million wants. There are eleven organs,—five senses, five organs of action and the mind. And these eleven organs each have three moods,—the happy mood, the restless or unhappy mood and the sleeping or lazy mood. When you are in a happy mood, whatever you see seems beautiful. In the unhappy mood, everything

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seems distasteful, even your wife, your children, your home. In the lazy mood you do not want to go to anywhere or do anything but sleep. The eye that sees everything as beautiful in the happy mood, the same sees everything as distasteful in the unhappy mood; and in the lazy mood, it does not want to see anything. You are, as it were, three different gentlemen. The happy gentleman is not the same as the unhappy gentleman and the unhappy gentleman is not the same as the sleeping gentleman.

Then count your optical desires. You want to go to the north to see Benares and to the south to see Rameswaram; you want to go to an art gallery to see fine pictures and to a garden to see rare plants. See how many things you want to see. You cannot even calculate them. So eleven organs multiplied by three moods make thirty-three millions, or innumerable desires, for million here is used in the sense of innumerable. All these desires are so many hungers. Who can satisfy them all? Can any man? Even if you go to an emperor, can he satisfy them? No; only God can put before you a dish to satisfy these innumerable hungers and this dish goes by the name of the universe.

Now when God puts this dish before you, there must be servants to serve it. As in our feasts there is always one man who serves the rice, another who distributes the curry and another who passes the

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sweet-meats, so God has many servants to distribute the food at His feast. Those who give up the good things go by the name of gods; those who give us the bad things go by the name of demons. And as there are thirty-three million dishes to satisfy our thirty-three million hungers, so there must be thirty-three million gods to serve us with all we want. And they are constantly satisfying our desires. All our optical desires, all our auditory desires, all our gustatory desires, in short, all our desires find satisfaction and there is always a being serving it.

This is how we think when we analyse the universe superficially. If we think, with the scientific men of the West, that we are born with our birth and die with our death, then our analysis is the best: this universe is a great banquet hall where the gods are servants and we are all hungry people. But it may be asked whether we are in this banquet hall of the universe as beggars or His guests. We are not His guests. Why? Because we have egoism in us. If we were His guests, there would be some relationship between us. We only invite those people with whom we are related either by blood or by friendship. So if you are a guest of God, you must be a son, or a brother, or at least a friend. But do you feel yourself to be that? You may wear a *Namam* on your forehead, but when you put it on, do you feel that you are related to Vishnu? No; you put it on because your father has taught you to do so. It has

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become a sort of fashion to put on the *Namam*; but that does not mean that the man loves God. If he is a real lover of God, he will not show it. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that if a man covers himself with all these religious marks, he looks like a signboard telling people that there is so much piety here for sale, just as a shop-keeper puts out a sign in front of his shop. A real devotee, however, will never care to be a shop-keeper; he will wish to stay, not in a shop, but in the temple.

When therefore I ask myself whether I am related to God as a son to father, or as a servant to master, or as friend to friend, I am forced to confess that I do not feel that I am so related to Him. Many even doubt the existence of God. Ask yourself if you believe in the existence of God as you believe in the existence of your wife and children. You will have to admit that you have no real faith in God. And without faith how can you establish relations with Him? Until you get that faith you cannot say: "Thou art my father, Thou art my mother, Thou art my friend and companion; Thou art my learning, Thou art my wealth, Thou art my All-in-All, my one Lord." Since, therefore, you are not related to God, you have not come here as His guest. You have come as a hungry beggar to satisfy your hunger.

There are many people who think that God is a useless idea; that without God the universe would go on

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better ; that it is religion which has unmanned us ; and they say, "See how much money is wasted in building temples." When men become so ignorant, so blind as to believe in all these things, then God thinks it is time to teach them a lesson ; so He sends famine or plague or earthquake. You know the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel. At that time there was only one language in the world and people had not to waste their time in learning so many languages in order to make themselves understood ; so they could do many other things and they became very strong. Finally they said. "If we combine together we can do all things very easily ; and if by combining together we can do so much, then why need we ask the help of God ?" So they began to build a gigantic tower from which they could jump into heaven. When their vanity carried them so far, a mysterious power confused their tongues ; then when a man called for mortar, his fellow-labourer did not understand him and when another asked for bricks, no one knew what he said ; so the work was brought to an end.

This is what happens when vanity raises its head. Now we think that we can do everything, that we have no need of any help. We think with our own body and our own mind we can accomplish everything ; and because of this wretched pride we forget our God. We do not even remember our fellowmen. If anyone tries to rule

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over me how quickly I resent it? When I cannot bear that any man should be superior to me, how can I entertain the idea of a God who is over me? So when this vanity comes,—that with my books, with my science, with my mind, I can do everything,—God says: “Now is the time for Me to make My presence felt,” and He sends plague and famine to teach a good lesson to His children. Then when plague and famine come everyone begins to go to holy places and remember God.

To come back to our analysis: Before we accept the conclusion of the world being a banquet hall, and we so many hungry souls, let us ascertain if we are hungry at all. No one has ever asked this question except a few Indians. Every one is cocksure that he is hungry; every one believes that he is three and a half cubits in length, and that he is born and that he dies. But we Hindus have found out that although we may be hungry apparently, our real nature is above all those thirty-three million desires, above body and above mind. Men in the modern West do not admit this. They take their real self to be identical with their body and mind. They think, “What can we not do with our own strength?” So they, like the people on the Tower of Babel say, “Let us all join together and we can do everything.” Thus they have developed great powers of organisation and co-operation and they have been able, no doubt, to bring many comforts to their bodies. But they have also multiplied

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their wants. A man can never be happy whose wants are many. He alone is happy whose wants are few and he is happiest who has no wants. As Swami Vivekananda has said, the Hindu has solved the problem, how little a man can live on, and the West, on how much a man can live. Thus in the West, having so many wants, people are never happy; for these wants bring restlessness and restlessness kills happiness.

When a man mistakes slavery for mastery he makes the worst sort of blunder. They are making this mistake in the West; but they are sincere and they want to know the Truth, and that sincerity will bring them to the Truth. Therefore many of them are beginning to understand our religion better than we. You do not know your own greatness. Although your fathers have given you the greatest religion, you do not care for it and try on the contrary to imitate the manners and customs of the West.

The question, is, Am I really hungry? Nowadays this question is not asked; but in olden days people asked: Is it a fact that I am hungry? Is it a fact that I am three and a half cubits tall, am I really born and do I die? But if I am but a mere dweller in the body, by knowing the body I do not know myself. I am in the house, I am not the house; the plaster, the rafters, the bricks are not a part of me. By knowing the house, I do not know myself. So if I am only a dweller in the

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body, what should be my characteristics? Hunger is in the body. Eyes are a part of the body, ears are a part of the body, all the organs are a part of the body. But if I am not the body, then the eyes, ears, and other sense-organs are not in me; hence optical desires, auditory desires *etc.*, are not in me.

Then who am I? I cannot have any desire and if I have no want, I must be the richest and the happiest man in the universe. Then my duty must be to realise this fact,—that I am not the body or the mind. As I am not this school hall, although I am in it, so I am not the body or the mind. Then if they do not belong to me, they must belong to some one else and I should not claim another's property. My primary duty, therefore, must be to realise this; then I shall be perfectly happy, for I shall have no wants. And if I have no wants, I am perfect. Want always implies imperfection; and if I am without wants, I must be perfect. If I am perfect, I am That, I am Brahman.

But though I may be intellectually convinced that I am Brahman, have I realised this? It is no use saying, "*Aham Brahmasmi*" when I have not power enough to support my wife and children. Then what are we to do? God says there is only one way: "They only escape this Maya who take refuge at My feet." This Maya comes to us as wife, family, as name and fame. Man is tied to this Maya in the shape of wife, of

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stomach, of money; and it is not possible to untie himself. So God says: "Man, do not be vain like the builders of the Tower of Babel. Know that you can do nothing without Me. I alone can untie that bond which holds you. Come to me and I can set you free." When a man hears God's voice and realises that of himself he is powerless, he says: "Oh Lord! Thou art infinitely great and I am nothing. Save me. Not mine but Thine will be done." Let that be your motto. And if you cannot have faith in God whom you have not seen then go to a God whom you can see and such an one is the *Sadguru* (the Illumined Teacher). Go to him, serve him like a menial servant and he will illumine you. He will lead you to God who has declared, "None else can save you, for I am the Lord of the whole universe."

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THE natural condition of all living beings is the condition of calmness. When anyone loses his natural condition, he at once becomes restless; for restfulness, calmness and peace, all these are the necessary accompaniments of the natural condition. If then in our natural state calmness must be realised, let us analyse and see what calmness is. Calmness and sameness are synonymous. Calmness means when there is no change. If you change from one condition to another in rapid succession, that is what we know as restlessness. But when you remain in the same condition without any change whatever, that is the state of perfect calmness. Hence calmness and sameness must be one. Now this *same* condition is the monistic condition. If it changes in the smallest degree, then there are two: and again if the least change comes, there will be three, four, five and so on. The more changes occur, the more the numerals will come up and the more restless will the man become. If then absolute peace means absolute sameness, that sameness implies unity in our whole nature.

When one goes away and another comes in, that is what makes change. If we substitute birth and death

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for the word change, we find the same thing; for all change means the birth of one condition and the death of another. Therefore where there is change, there must be birth and death. By the absolutely peaceful, calm condition, however, we mean that condition which is unchanging, that is, birthless, deathless, eternal: and since calmness is our natural condition, then in the natural condition we are eternal and in the unnatural condition we are non-eternal. The moment that we step out of our natural condition we grow uneasy, restless, and all sorts of false thoughts take possession of our minds. We begin to fear disease, to fear death, to be anxious about our circumstances in life.

Why do we hate death so much? Because it is an unnatural condition for us to die. But if it is true that our natural condition is eternal, then we have no need to fear death. What is this phenomenon of death? Just a moment ago a man was carried by on a bier. He was lying there motionless, those hands will not work any more; those legs will not walk any more; those eyes that only a few hours before were seeing, are now blind. What strange phenomenon is this? Death means going out of one house to go to a better house, leaving an uninhabitable dwelling to find a habitable one. As Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: "As you throw away an old suit of clothes and take a new and better one, so the

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soul throws away an old, worn-out body to take a new and better one." Death is just this and nothing more. It is death only to the body. The soul never dies.

Now another question comes up : If the soul is thus eternal by nature, will it be limited in extension ? This is a very important point, for even if it is unlimited by time, may it not be limited by space ? We have been reading of atoms in our books on chemistry. (The term "atom" is used throughout this lecture in the sense of the ultimate particle of matter.) From these we have learnt that an atom is a thing which is beginningless and endless ; so we know that a thing which is infinitely small in magnitude may be eternal. Is the soul like that ? No ; it is not possible that that which is unlimited by time should be limited by space. That which is eternal must be infinite. That which exists throughout eternity cannot be limited by space, for that which is limited must have to undergo change. Something which is limited is not all-powerful and therefore must be subject to one who is all-powerful. It must then be governed by that all-powerful being and be made to change according to his will. But that which is eternal, cannot change, since change means death. So if you are eternal, you must also be infinite and all-powerful in order to keep your sameness. A millionaire may have enormous wealth, but if there is one richer than he, he cannot be sure of keeping what he has ; if, therefore, he

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wants to keep up the sameness of his wealth, he must be infinitely rich. Then his fortune can never be lost or diminished; for whatever you deduct from infinity, infinity will remain; and whatever you may add to infinity, infinity will still be the same. Therefore if you are to exist throughout eternity, you cannot be limited in extension; if you are eternal you must be infinite. Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: "That which is eternal must pervade all space."

I will give you another example. There is the hypothesis at present that the atom is the smallest thing we know, that it is the final particle, like the geometrical point, which according to its definition has no part and no magnitude. If it has any part, it is divisible and out of the one we can make two, out of two, four and so on. But an atom, we are told, is indivisible, the last and smallest manifestation of matter. This, however, is merely an hypothesis. If it has no part, no magnitude, it has no existence. Out of no magnitude how can all these magnitudes great and small, which we find in the universe, come into existence? How out of no parts can parts come into being? As an hypothesis this may be very good, but it is not verified in fact. An atom must have magnitude, however minute, in order that these big magnitudes may come out of it; and out of it have come the earth, the solar system, the whole universe. But if it has magnitude, then I can

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take the knife of my mind and divide it into two, and that again into four; and I can go on thus dividing it throughout eternity and still there will remain something to cut. If there is always something left, it is plain that one cannot destroy matter and yet something is destroyed.

In the atom, therefore, we find two things,—one destructible, the other indestructible. What is the destructible side? The form side. By form we mean that which is large or small, or which being small may become smaller, or being big may become bigger; that is, something which changes. But although the form is constantly changing, existence is there always and this is the indestructible side. The changeful or destructible side is the form side (*asat*), and the deathless or indestructible side is the existence side (*sat*). The form side is always necessarily formful; but the existence side, is it too formful? If it is also formful, it must be destructible and changeable, for forms can always be made larger or smaller, but since it baffles every attempt to destroy it, it must be formless.

Then the question arises: How can anything exist that has not a form, since everything we see has a form? This table is square, with four legs, of a certain height and dimension. That bench again has another form and size, and so with everything we see. Can there be then a formless existence? I have just pointed out to you that

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form can never be made formless. But if this formless existence is eternally formless, what kind of existence can that be? What is formless existence? Formless existence is an infinite existence. The definition of form is that which is bounded on all sides by lines. Formful existence means limited existence. Formless existence means limitless existence. The finite is always surrounded by something bigger and that again by something still bigger until we reach that, than which there is nothing larger. And what is that? Infinity. So we shall have to go to that infinite something before we can stop. Existence and finiteness are inseparably connected according to our ordinary senses. We only know existence that is finite. But it is not possible for the finite to exist if it has not an infinite existence as a background. For instance, we are in this room, this room is in the Theological High School, this Theological High School is in Madras, Madras is in India, India is in Asia, Asia is on the earth, the earth is in the solar system, the solar system is in the universe and the universe, where is that? The universe is in God and God is infinite. Thus the background of our existence here is infinity and only because infinity is there, is it possible for this finite to exist. Hence formless existence is infinite existence. But infinity can never be divided. We cannot cut it with a knife. And because it is indivisible, it is always one and the same.

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Every material particle is both formful and formless. Because it is formful, it admits of all change. Because it is formless, it admits of no change. It is evident then that the material particle that goes by the name of atom is not infinitesimally small. It is in reality infinite. But where does that infinite reside? What I see is the formful, so it is not there. Then does it exist in space? Space is limited. The idea of space is based on the idea of here and there; that is, to get the idea of space I must be here and the other must be there and that which lies between is space. If, moreover, space comes into existence after the previous existence of two entities, then it is a third existence and it must be limited, for each of these entities limits the other. Hence space cannot be limitless, it must be limited. Formless existence, therefore, cannot be in space. But space exists outside me, so formless existence cannot exist outside me.

Time again is based on the idea of before and after. We can only know time by a succession of thoughts in the mind; by something that has come before and something that has followed after. Whenever our thought becomes perfectly fixed on one object, we lose account of time. Therefore time is formful. But we are considering formless existence. So we see that it must be beyond time as well as space, and hence beyond creation, for creation rests on time and space. Now

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all these are outside me, so formless or infinite existence must be inside me. What is inside me? Myself. I alone am there and there is none to limit me. Time is inside the mind, space is inside the body. Without body no space is possible, and without mind no time is possible; for mind is the basis of time and body is the basis of space. But I am beyond both mind and body. This formless existence also, because it is beyond time and space, must be beyond mind and body and therefore beyond the universe.

This formless existence which I have found out in the atom, because it cannot be localized in time, because it cannot be localized in space, because it cannot be localized in the universe, must be localized in me, in my consciousness. Therefore in me must be found that infinite eternal existence. I am indestructible by nature. If I try to destroy myself, there must be that part of me which destroys still remaining; and if I destroy that, still will there be that part, for the destroyer can never be destroyed. I am therefore limitless by my nature, so I must be infinite; and as there cannot be two infinities, I must be one with that infinite in the atom. And as infinity cannot be unconscious, I must be infinitely conscious. It is because we are now only finitely conscious that we do not know all about a thing. We see this table. We are conscious of its size and shape, but we do not know what may

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be inside it. But if we are infinitely conscious, we must know all about it. Hence if I am infinitely conscious, I must be all-knowing; and if I am all-knowing, I must be all-powerful, since weakness is based on ignorance. The moment we extricate ourselves from this network of formful existence, that very moment we realise that we are all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal and infinite.

You may ask: How is it possible for me to forego my blissful, all-knowing, all-powerful, eternal, infinite nature and identify myself with this finite being, who is born and who dies, who is full of fears and anxieties? I have already given the answer. Because you have been thinking unnaturally about yourself. It is because for ages and ages you have been indentifying yourself with the body that you have been thinking so poorly of yourself. There is a Spanish proverb: "He who lives with dogs will begin to howl." According to your association will you grow up to manhood. Because of bad habit you have been holding all these false thoughts about yourself. The struggle against bad habit, against these false ideas, is known as practical religion. It cannot be in any way theoretical. A man may say, "I am eternal, perfect, infinite," but if he has not realised it, his words will mean nothing. When you say, "I am all-knowing" and know it, then you become it.

Practical religion is that which enables you to wage an incessant war against your unnatural way of thinking.

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This idea that you are Mr. So-and-So, that you are short or tall, dark or fair, happy or miserable is all false. You are nameless and formless, birthless and deathless, eternally blissful and free from all miseries. You have made a great jump out of your natural condition into an unnatural condition and that is why you are so confused. You have so absolutely forgotten your real nature and so identified yourself with your apparent nature that you are thinking yourself just the opposite of what you really are. And the only way to remedy this is by renunciation of your false nature, by giving up all these false ideas. "This landed property," you must think, "does not belong to me. This body even is not mine. I am beyond body and mind, beyond time and space, beyond birth and death, all-perfect, all-full, all-good. No anxiety can ever come to me, no misery can ever come to me, no disease or death can ever touch me. I am there where no fear has access, where no pain has access, where no anxiety can enter. I am in that place where I am infinitely happy, infinitely secure, infinitely perfect. No name can be given to me. I am not a man, not a god, not a Brahmin, not rich or poor. Nothing can qualify me. I am without limitation and quality."

This is what is called realisation, salvation, onliness. Sooner or later you must realise your infinite nature. If you realise it in this life, then you will escape the bondage of finite existence. If you do not realise it

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in this life, then innumerable times you will have to be born. Weakness will not do. Truth cannot be attained by a weak man. Throw away all these false notions,—that you are tall or short, fair or dark, man or woman. When you sleep, do you remember that you are large or small, a man or a woman? No, at that time you are calm, peaceful, self-existent. That which you realise involuntarily, learn to realise it voluntarily.

You must leap over this ocean of *samsara* or ignorance. Otherwise you are not worthy to be called a man. The more you analyse yourself, the more you will realise your infinite nature. Then these little ambitions of yours, these little troubles of yours will seem too small for you. This little life will no longer be able to hold you. These little questions about money, name and fame will seem too trivial for you. You must belittle everything, then you will not be satisfied with your finite condition. You will say: “All these little things are too insignificant for me who am infinite!” Thus belittle your pride of knowledge, your social power, your wealth. Think: “These are not intended for me. They are intended for the foolish and ignorant. They are intended for limited beings, but I am limitless; and I must go beyond this life to satisfy my infinite hunger.”

If, on the contrary, you remain satisfied with this, what is waiting for you? Innumerable deaths. You have seen a man die and such pain will be yours

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again and again, if you do not realise your infinite nature. The key to unlock the door of infinity is in your hand; but you are like the man who goes about searching for his necklace until some one comes and tells him that it is around his neck. In the same way someone must point out that your necklace is there; that what you are searching for, you have got already; and this someone is your *Guru* (spiritual teacher). He is there to remind you that you cannot be born, you cannot die, that you are eternal and infinite.

The key to unlock the glory of your own self is with you. Use it. Be not led away by the senses. You have drowned your wisdom in the quagmire of sensuality and selfishness; therefore you are miserable. Beware of sensuality. The senses are in your way. The wayward mind, this body, both stand in your way. They have deceived you. It is because you believe that you are a slave, that is why you yield to them. The cause of this delusion is in the senses. Do not let your senses rule you. Do not let the mind rule over you. The army should not be allowed to lead the commander-in-chief. If it does, then the battle is sure to be lost; the commander-in-chief alone must lead. Be the commander of your senses. Be the commander of your mind. Make them obey you absolutely. Be their master. Unlock the shrine of infinite bliss and enjoy the treasure hidden within.

MIND AND MAYA

Mind is one and not more than one. But when that mind is divided into many parts, each part becomes weak. If, however, the dissipated mind is brought together again, then the whole mind regains its power. You know that if an ordinary mathematical problem is placed before two students, the less concentrated mind will need more time to solve it. The weaker mind the longer he will have to think, or in other words, the longer the mind will have to doubt. So long as there is a doubt in your mind, so long you will have to think. A thinking mind is always a doubting mind. For instance, you see a rope and mistake it to be a snake; then you look and think it may be a rope, but a wind makes it move and again you think it may be a snake; and so you go on reasoning and thinking until you ascertain what it really is and all doubt leaves your mind. Then you cease to think about it.

Doubt is a disease of the mind; and just as the body is restless under disease, so the mind is restless under doubt. This very restlessness of the mind shows that doubt is not a natural condition. The natural condition of the mind is where all doubt is solved, where no doubt remains, and that is the mind of the Lord. God does not have to think. He has no doubt, everything is solved

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for him ; so His mind is never restless. Now if the mind is restless it is because it is in an unnatural condition. Restlessness always indicates an abnormal condition : hence doubt, which brings restlessness, must be unnatural. Suppose a mother loses her baby, is she at rest ? No ; so long as she does not know where her child is, she is running here and there and cannot remain quiet. But if someone comes and lays the baby in her arms, at once all unrest and doubt leave her and she is at peace.

Where is your mind ? You cannot tell me where it is. It is so scattered that you cannot bring it back. But if you can bring it home, as the mother her lost baby, you will be at peace. This concentration, or bringing the lost mind home, is the way to find peace. How has this mind been lost ? It has been waylaid by *Maya*. Just as a man comes and kidnaps a child by offering it sweet-meats, so you all have been kidnapped by this wicked *Maya*. It tries to lure you away. And for what ? It wants to make a human sacrifice of you. You desire life and it holds death for you. It promises happiness, but instead, it puts a load of misery on you. It tells you : " You must study this physical universe, you must know about science, you must conquer the forces of nature." This is how this siren of *Maya* deceives this little baby of the mind ; and you say : " Yes, yes, knowledge is power. I must know something about these

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forces of the universe so that I can make them give me what I want."

Man tries, therefore to gain all the knowledge he can about the universe. With what result? To try to know about the universe is like trying to touch the horizon. You may go round and round the earth, but you will never be able to touch the horizon; and it is equally foolish to try to know all about the universe for you can never make the infinite finite. There are some who say that this universe is finite, that in infinite space is this little finite universe. But then one asks: "What is the use of this infinite space? Why is so much space wasted?" There must be something in it; and it will never be possible for finite man to know all that fills infinite space.

Thus under the influence of this siren *Maya*, man is constantly misled. Everyone wants to be happy, wants to be all-knowing and wants to live forever. From this we can make out that man is *Satchidanandam*, or eternally wise and blissful. But he has lost his all-blissful nature, and although he is struggling to regain it, he is taking a false course. He is trying to find it in the world. Thus *Maya* has stolen man's mind away and hidden it in the meshes of creation.

Maya is mysterious in her nature. She is bad and she makes you think she is good. She is your greatest enemy and she makes you think she is your only friend.

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She is really very terrible to look at, for she is death ; but she appears very handsome to you. Now the question comes : How can we save ourselves from this siren ? There is one method—that of discrimination. When a man reflects : “ This world is not a home for me. I may get married and think I have a home here ; but some day a child dies and that reminds me that I do not belong here. When I have thus made out the untruthful nature of *Maya*, I must keep that truth before me. I must develop my discriminative faculty. I must analyse the world before me, and then I shall find out that nowhere—neither in the worlds above, which go by the name of *swarga* (heavens), or here in this world, shall I find happiness. For in none of these is life eternal and nowhere short of eternal life shall I find happiness.” In this way a man becomes steady in his wisdom.

When he reaches that state, man looks upon this whole world as a prison-house. So it cannot be a home. Home carries with it the idea of permanency. Home carries with it the idea of comfort, for you are nowhere so comfortable as in your home. Home also carries with it the idea of freedom. Outside of your home you are not free. But in his own home a slave is free. Thus home carries with it these three ideas,—permanency, comfort and freedom. This world therefore cannot be home, for none of these are to be found here ; yet because the home here has a little bit of permanency,

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you love it; for you love permanency so much that even where there is a smell of permanency, you love that. So it is with freedom and comfort.

When man finds out, therefore, that the world can never give him a home which will be permanent, or which will bring him comfort and freedom, he begins to look elsewhere. For how many homes here give this? Even where there is an ideal home, it still does not satisfy our hunger, for we have an unlimited hunger for bliss, for eternal life and for freedom; and in any home here these can be had only in a limited quantity. Hence this world can never give us our ideal home, a home where we can have infinite happiness, infinite comfort and infinite liberty. Go to any king or emperor and see if he has these. You will find that no person is satisfied with what he has. When a man discovers this, then he says: "If I cannot find such a home here, I must search elsewhere." And when he reaches this state he becomes steadfast in his spiritual life.

This is one method of learning how to concentrate the mind. When you know that the pleasures here and the pleasures in the higher worlds are not such as to satisfy your hankering, when you know that all is impermanent here and there all is *Nityam* (eternal), then your mind will have a tendency to go there. Man knows then that all this cannot bring him happiness and he says: "I must not make friends with this world."

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Thus he grows disgusted with this siren of *Maya*, for he has weighed the whole universe in the balance and has found it worthless. But when he wants to come away from it, he finds it very difficult. Once an opium-eater went to a doctor in Calcutta and said: "Doctor, this opium is undermining my constitution and I know it will kill me, yet when I try to give it up, I cannot." The physician replied: "Do not try to stop it. Go on taking it just the same; but when you weigh out the quantity for the day, use a piece of chalk in the other scale, and each time before you use it, make a mark with the chalk on the floor." The man did this and at the end of the six months he found the chalk one-half its original size and the amount of opium also diminished by half. At the end of a year the chalk was gone and he had broken himself of the habit of opium-eating.

In the same way the man who would give up the world learns that he must do it gradually. He finds out that the mind has become perverse on account of the bad habit it has contracted and he must destroy this habit little by little with the aid of *Sama* and *Dama* (control of body, mind and senses). Next he discovers that although he wants to make his body do this or that, it has become weak through indulgence; and so he must begin to practise *Titiksha* (fortitude). Then he sees that although he wants to concentrate his mind he cannot do it, so he strives to be dead to every attraction and charm.

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Thus he gets rid of this siren of *Maya*. But as he goes on, he says: "Yes, I am dead to the world, no doubt, but now where shall I go? And who is there to point out to me the way?" When he is in this predicament, the Guru (spiritual teacher) comes forward. At this moment he must have *Sraddha* (Faith in the Scriptures and in the teacher). The next stage is *Samadhana* (one-pointed devotion to the Ideal) which brings the final victory over this siren *Maya*. In this he realises that towards which, not only every man, but every animalcule is struggling,—eternal freedom. To do this, however, we must struggle hard. We shall have to give up all that tied us to this world. And we can only do this when we have something to take the place of what we give up. Very few people have that faith in the Scriptures or faith in the Guru which will enable them to give up, for very few know that this is not their home. Every man has naturally a love for his own country and his own home. The moment he is with his wife, children, sisters and mother, he does not want to leave them. He labours all the day just to please them. This is the real state of affairs with every one, and since this is the case, then we shall understand why there is to be found in the world scarcely one searcher after truth.

It is very easy to repeat these facts, "This is not my home," *etc.* It is very easy to deliver a lecture

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on the subject, as I am doing; but to say: "This is not my home, this is not my mother, this is not my father," and believe it, is very difficult. Who is really searching after this real home? Yet who does not want the things to be found in that real home,—happiness, freedom, eternal life? It is only because we cannot get these that we are satisfied with the little things here. But if we could get these we would take them very gladly. Yet if it is a fact that there is such a home we must seek it. If there is an eternal Father, an eternal Mother, we must find them. Prahlada knew that he had such a Father and such a Mother and so he was able to withstand all the persecutions of his earthly father.

If we discriminate properly, we shall have to arrive at this conclusion: "Yes, I love a true home, I am naturally a lover of such a home; but that home cannot be found here. If I am eternal I must have an eternal home, with an eternal Father and Mother." This path of discrimination very few will be able to follow. Among millions perhaps one will try to go to his true home. For this reason Sri Krishna says: "Among thousands some one striveth for perfection, and among thousands of those who strive, some one may attain." And again he tells us: "Your only duty should be to come to me. This method of self-help is very dangerous." What then does He advise? Since this path of discrimination can be taken by very few,

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what is the most practicable path which everyone can take? He says: "None can escape this siren of *Maya*, which has come out of Me, save by taking refuge at my feet. You must go to a teacher and follow him with humility and obedience and serve him with a lowly spirit. Those people who take refuge at my feet, even though they are naturally sinful, will become righteous souls and attain peace. Whoever becomes my devotee is sure to be saved."

So, my dear friends, if everyone of you wants to be perfectly happy, if everyone of you wants to escape death, you will first have to get rid of this world. This world is a terrible siren. How can you give up it? Simply by loving God. You need not give up anything; merely love God with your whole heart. Do all for Him. Every man works at something, no one can remain inactive; do all your work for Him. "Whatever you eat, whatever you give to others, whatever austerities you perform, do all for Me. Never do for yourself, do all for Me. Never live for yourself, live for Me."

In this way, if you live for God, and if this ideal is ever before your eyes, that lost thread will be found. Then you will be able to find your true home, your true father, your true mother. Then when anyone asks you who is your father, you will say: "My father is God." At present you take that as the answer of a madman. But now and then there comes a

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man who knows that this father is God—as Christ and Prahlada did.

When you thus unite yourself with God, if you know how to love Him, He with His infinite grace will know how to love you infinitely more. When you rise to the height that you are able to recognize God as your Father, all distinctions of caste and creed will drop away from you. Therefore our great Master Sri Krishna has taught us: “They should be regarded as wise who can regard a humble and learned Brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a chandala as one and the same (seeing the same Self in all). For God is infinite, so his love must be infinite and it must go out to all equally.”

Blessed is the man who has faith in such a God. In this twentieth century very few men believe in the existence of a God. They believe in their own existence, in the existence of their wife and children; but few believe in the existence of a God. Blessed, therefore, is he who believes in God and who believes that all else is unreal. The ordinary man believes in the reality of this world only, but the true believer thinks that God alone is real and that this world is only a great mirage. “What is day to the seer, is night to the ordinary man; and that in which the worldly man wakes, is night to the wise.” The conclusions of the man of the world are never the conclusions of the wise man.

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Therefore your duty should be never to forget your true home and your Companion. Never neglect that Companion ; for all these are only your companions for a few days. Blessed will that day be for you when we will look upon God as your one companion and your true home.

May that blessed day come to everyone of you !
This is my heart's prayer.

THE POWER OF SPIRIT

IN THIS world we no doubt see that a man who does not glorify the Lord may live a successful life. Often those who have no moral standard, who oppress the poor, who lord it over the good, appear to live happily ; and in many ways wrong seems to prosper. But this material power wins the victory only for a few days. In the end God always comes out victorious. It is the spiritual power that endures. The power of Napoleon or an Alexander the Great is nothing compared to the power that those men have who never shed a drop of human blood and never cared to seek for power. I can prove this. What is man ? Man is mind. When you can control your own mind, the art which shows you that, will show you how to control all other minds. If you can solve one problem by the rule of three, you can solve all other problems. The principle remains the same for all. So if you have learnt to control the force working through your own mind, it is easy to control the same force elsewhere, for mind is everywhere alike. The teacher is one who has learnt the art of controlling his own mind. The Great Ones like Christ or Buddha who have conquered the world did so because they had conquered themselves.

The power of Spirit is infinitely greater than the power of matter. But what is spirit and what is matter ?

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Whatever can be felt, conceived, thought of, seen, or heard, is matter. It is the object, something that can be known. Spirit is not all this. Put a *not* to all these and that will define Spirit. Matter is heavy, Spirit is not heavy; matter is limited, Spirit is unlimited; matter is changeable, Spirit is not changeable. All that is not matter is Spirit; so by knowing what is not matter, we know spirit indirectly. But what am I? We think that this "I" is the name of the body and we therefore identify ourselves with the body. But this "I" is something else. The body is destined to die, but this "I" shrinks from death; the body is dull and stupid, but this "I" is eager, hungering to learn; this body is unconscious, but this "I" is ever striving to be more and more conscious. So all the tendencies of this "I" are away from the body or matter; and if we have this spiritual tendency, we must have come from spirit. All the great teachers have taught us: "Do not think that you are this bundle of flesh and blood. This idea is the offspring of ignorance. You are not made to live on what the world can give you. You are self-existent. You are beginningless, endless spirit. You are naturally conscious. Eternally you are existent. 'Sword cannot pierce you, fire cannot burn you, water cannot wet you, air cannot dry you!.' This is your true nature."

Ask yourself whether you wish to live or whether you wish to die; whether you wish to be ignorant, or

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whether you wish to be all-knowing. We all want to be all-knowing, therefore by nature we must be all-knowing. We all want to be blissful, therefore we must be all-blissful; and we must be eternal, because we never want to die. A fish taken out of water will not care for the greatest luxury or honour on land. You may lay him on the throne and offer him everything, but he will say: "Put me in dirty water even, but do not keep me on land." This is because water is his natural element. We judge of the nature of an animal by its likes and dislikes; if in the same way we look to our own likes and dislikes, we can tell what is our real nature. Does not everyone like to be *Sat* or existent? No one wishes to die. Does not everyone long for unlimited knowledge. Does not everyone desire unbroken happiness? So the great teachers have found out that the nature of man is *Sat-chit-anandam* (eternal life, knowledge and bliss). He is not the material body, he is not the subtle body, he is not all these *koshas* or sheaths; but he is That which he is desiring. The more we think of ourselves in this way, the more our infinite nature will manifest itself.

It is not possible to know the Infinite if we are finite. We must first know that we are infinite. We wish to marry the Infinite, we must therefore belong to the same caste. A Brahmin boy can only marry a Brahmin girl; so to win the hand of the Infinite we must

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prove and know that we are infinite. Matter is that which is limited and which limits. We now feel limited by coming in contact with matter. We must realise that we are not matter but Spirit; we must cease to identify ourselves with the body. We must convince ourselves that we are Spirit, by differentiating ourselves from matter. We must join ourselves to God. To do this we must conquer all egotism. This "I" is the greatest barrier between ourselves and God. It hides our God from us.

Do I belong to myself? Can I do what I wish? Or am I guided by a higher power? If I analyse my life, I shall find that I am a plaything in the hands of an Infinite Power. I am not my own master. If I were, I could get what I like. Who does not wish to have everything to gratify his desires? But no one succeeds in getting all that he wants. No matter how rich a man is, he always wants something. Do we find anyone who is perfectly happy? Go to the Emperor of Russia, go to any prince or king and ask if he is happy. They have power, they have wealth, they have apparently everything; and yet not one of them will say that he is truly happy. This is because no joy can be found in selfishness. It is only when we forget ourselves for some one else that we become happy, and lasting happiness is ours only when we have forgotten ourselves wholly for God.

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It is the highest duty of a man to love God above all things and this love must be incessant and disinterested. We must never cease to love Him, but not because He has powers to satisfy our desires. We must not love Him, for what He gives—as people seek out a rich man, follow him about and flatter him; then, being satisfied or disappointed go away. Such time-servers are not real devotees. Their love is not for the Lord but for what they can get from Him. They are not God-worshippers, but mammon-worshippers. What is disinterested love? The little child loves his father. That father may be poor and wretched, yet the child will run and jump up in his lap with joy, but not in the lap of the rich man who comes with him. Such should be our love for God. And it must be unceasing. We must never forget Him for a moment. Then only will our higher nature be free to act. If we really love the Lord of the Universe, we shall no longer care for the temporary things of the world. When love for the Infinite One awakens within us, then all these small worldly satisfactions,—name, fame, property, position, will seem worthless to us. If a man can claim a millionaire for his father, he will be so proud and so secure in his father's wealth that he will fear nothing and ask nothing. So If we can once learn to regard the Lord of Universe as our real father, then we shall lose all anxiety and greed.

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We fear and desire because we do not know what we are. The light of the lamp above us, there, is brilliant; but if the chimney that surrounds it were not transparent, the light would be obscured. So each of us is a great light, but that light, has been obscured by our ignorance, because we identify ourselves with the body and are attracted by the things of this world. Incessant and disinterested love for God, however, will remove, all these obstructions. When we have been able to give our whole heart to Him, a revelation will come to us which will make the little riches of the world, the little joys of the world, the little sorrows of the world seem as nothing. It is these narrow earthly attachments which have covered up the infinite nature of man and which make him think that he is this limited human being. When they are removed, then at once he will realise his own nature; and when he realises his own nature, he will know that he is the son of the Infinite and Eternal Lord of all.

WHY THIS LOVE OF SELF ?

IN THIS world nothing is so dear to us as our own self. Other loves are secondary ; love for ourself is primary. But why do we love our own self more than anything in the universe ? To answer this question we must first know what we love and what we do not love. We love beautiful things, not that which is ugly. We love sweet words, not harsh ones. We love those who are pleasing to us, not those who displease us. We love good dishes, not unsavoury ones. We love to be in the cool shade of a wide-spreading tree, not out on the burning desert. In short, we love whatever harmonizes with our nature ; we do not love that which does not agree with it. What has the power to make us happy, that we love. What has not the power to make us happy, that we hate. We do not like a sharp-tongued man or woman, we do not like repulsive sights, we do not like harsh sounds, because they do not make us happy.

If, then, love is based on the power to give me happiness, and I love myself most, then I must have the power to give myself the greatest happiness. I must be the most pleasing thing to myself in the universe. And since I never cease to love myself, no matter how much I grow, there must be within me a source of happiness on which I can call indefinitely. I see therefore

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that what the sages tell me must be true—that I am the abode of eternal happiness. “You are not three-and-a-half cubits in length,” they say, “full of troubles and miseries, as you imagine yourself to be. Bliss is your nature. You think you are helpless, that you are dependent on the world for everything; whereas you are by your very nature all-blissful.” This self which I know, however, is certainly not all-blissful. It does not always please me or make me happy. It cannot be this self, then, that I love. On the contrary, as I begin to know myself better, I find that this thing which I call myself is the real cause of all my misfortunes and sufferings. In it is localized all that which limits and deludes me. It is the real seat of ignorance or *Maya*, and only as I get rid of the idea of ego, does *Maya* lose its hold on me.

This is true. Pull out the foundations and the whole house will collapse. Similarly take away the ego and the whole structure of *Maya* will fall. Now you think you are one with the body; that you have risen somewhere and you must set somewhere; that you are man or woman, weak or strong, Brahmin or non-Brahmin. These are all the qualifications of the ego; and if you analyse, you will find that they all rest on the body, so that ego and body must be one. But you existed before the body and you are going to exist after the body; therefore you cannot be the body, hence

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the ego is not you. In this way you can rid yourself of the idea of ego. And once you have gone behind the ego, in a trice *Maya* and *egoism* will vanish. Then you will realise the state of perfect calmness and know yourself to be something which is neither the body, nor the mind, nor the ego. To do this, however, you must go beyond all these to the eternal reality of your nature. And when you can do that, you will begin to know what happiness means. Then all the world will seem nothing to you but a playground. The whole universe will be a vast stage and you will play your part of man or woman, Brahmin or non-Brahmin, with the same gusto as a king plays the part of a sweeper in the theatre of his palace.

Now if someone asks: "Who are you?" you reply: "I am Mr. So-and-So, with such a name, belonging to such a family; I am tall or short, fair or dark, ill or well." And you keep thinking: "If I do not get food, I will die of starvation; if I do not get water, that will kill me; if I do not get air, I will smother." To jump suddenly from this habit of thought to that other pole—that you are infinite—is not possible in a moment. You will say: "I am feeling hungry at this instant; how can you tell me I have no hunger? I am just now suffering from thirst, how can you say that I am not thirsty?" Intellectually it is easy to grasp this idea that you are infinite; but when it comes to practice it is very difficult, for you are sure that you must

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earn your living, that you must seek the favour of this one who can help you find a position, or of that other who can procure for you some other advantage. You cannot suddenly form a totally new habit of thought ; the change must be gradual.

There was once an opium-eater who came to a wise physician to be cured of his weakness. "My dear fellow," the physician said, "you have been in the habit of taking such a large quantity of opium every day ; it will not be possible for you to give up all at once. But do this ; weigh the amount you take each day with a piece of chalk on the other scale, but before you put the chalk on the scale, always draw a line with it on the floor." The patient did this, and at the end of six months he found that the piece of chalk had been reduced to half its original size and also the quantity of opium he took. By the end of the year the chalk was gone and the man had completely broken himself off the habit. So everything should be done gradually. We cannot all at once think that we are not the body. As long as we believe that our happiness comes through the senses, we shall love it and cling to it. When, however, we begin to realise that if we get some pleasure through our sense life, we also get much misery, then we shall begin to look elsewhere. So by degrees, as we search for the source of happiness in us, or as we try to find

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that thing in us which makes us love ourself, we shall move back through layer after layer of our being until we reach our real nature, that *Atman* or Self on which our existence rests. Then the bondage of our lower nature will be broken.

It is the greatest relief when we get rid of egoism. It feels as if a heavy burden had rolled off from us. At once all our doubts, fears, anxieties and troubles disappear. When the "I" is gone, then nothing remains but God. Let Him exist alone in His glory. Why should I—this little I—do anything? All is He, and He is perfect, full, complete. Deny the ego. It is the cause of all our miseries. This egoism is the real hell-fire. What in the West they call Satan, we Hindus call ego. All forms of selfishness and suffering spring from it. To be rid of it is *Mukti* or freedom.

When man gains the consciousness of his pure Soul-nature, he becomes perfectly happy. That one has freed himself from slavery who knows that all the things which he wants are to be found inside himself, not outside; for then all want ceases, and want eats into man not only in this life, but in all lives to come. If then everything we want is inside, if we have there an inexhaustible fountain of bliss, is it not foolish to keep all our interests on the outside—our pleasures, our pursuits, our companions, all outside ourselves? So long as we do this, we shall never get rid of our miseries and taste true

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happiness. As the Bhagavad-Gita declares: "He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within and whose light is within, that Yogi, being wholly united with Brahman (the Supreme), attains to freedom absolute. Only he whose heart is detached from external experiences, tastes the happiness which is to be found in the (Highest) Self alone."

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

EVERYONE from the highest man to the lowest animalcule is searching after happiness. Some believe in their own muscle and fight for their happiness. Some go beyond nature and try to get satisfaction of desires and happiness from the invisible powers which support the universe. But everyone is seeking happiness outside through the five senses. Even in heaven is the same sort of happiness. This happiness is the result of the union of the physical universe with man through his five senses. When they come together in a harmonious manner, happiness is the result; when they unite inharmoniously, pain is the result.

This is the experience of all who seek happiness outside. Always the man must struggle and suffer. He must go through much pain to get a little happiness. He must throw away much to get little. In heaven it is the same. This search for happiness is a terrible bondage, even in heaven, for he cannot stay for ever. But ask yourself whether you love liberty, quietness, peace, bliss. At once the answer comes that you want all these. Everyone wants peace, but never is any peace to be found here. You even have to struggle if you would stand on your own legs. Every action of the body implies struggle.

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That which transcends thirst for happiness, thirst for wealth, and desire is called emancipation. These three bind man. They hold him fast to *Samsara*, to the wheel of birth and death. The poor soul is in that wheel, sometimes going up, sometimes going down, never at rest. Is there then no way out? Yes, there is a way out. There is surely someone above me who keeps me down. Is that Power a tyrant? No, he is my real Father; here "real" means eternal. Something cannot come out of nothing, something must come out of something. So my real Father must be an eternal Father. Naked I came into this world, without caste or creed; I was brought here by this Power. If so, what is my relation to Him? As a servant to the master, as a child to the father. But he is my Eternal Father, with Him I am eternally connected. Therefore it is my duty to obey this real father, not my temporary father. If the temporary father asks me to act contrary to the will of the Eternal Father, then I must disobey him as Prahlada did.

You know how happy a man becomes who learns that his father has a million pounds; so when I find that I have a father who is Lord of the whole universe, how much happier must I be. Again just as out of a horse, a horse is born; and out of an ass, an ass is born; so out of God, a God must be born. Therefore if God is my Father, I must be as good as God Himself and as happy. If I would realise this, I must give up

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the little for the great. I must not tie myself to the little love for earthly relations. If I would have true *Anandam* (bliss), I must give up the little happiness of the world. If I would make myself one with the great Spirit of the universe, I must cease to identify myself with the present environment. To go to Him, I must give up all attachment. He is Spirit, so I must seek Him in spirit. He is consciousness, so I must search Him in my consciousness. When consciousness leaves the body, at that time the body becomes like a chair or a table. It is your consciousness which makes the body different from the matter of the chair. But you have so identified yourself with your body that you are not conscious that it is a burden. If you have a load on your back, you feel it; but you do not feel the load of the body. Yet the weight of it you will know by lifting a dead body. So if you carry this load so easily, it shows how powerful you are; and the Atman carries it as easily as it would a straw.

If God is a conscious Being, He must be sought in consciousness, in the *Atman*, in the Self; and you must move inside yourself, not in matter, because it is unconscious. First you must discover Him inside yourself. Spirit lives in spirit. Where spirit is, there cannot be matter. So if you would seek spirit, you must seek Him in spirit. And where is spirit? Inside. So you must search for Him inside yourself. God lives in the

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heart of every living being. Where does the great God live? Man is His abode. He lives in man. He lives in man means that He lives in spirit. This is the real temple of God. There may be temples outside, but they are only photographs of this human temple. Temples have, you know, five walls, just as man has the five sheaths, and one must pass them all to come to God in the inner shrine. That is the seat of God. To go to Him, you must cross the big walls; you will not find Him outside. So in the same way, you will never find God in the universe, because He is always hidden inside the heart.

If then God is in me, I can go to Him easily. I do not have to buy a ticket. It requires no effort on my part. In reality, however, it is the most difficult thing in the world. If you have the power to go inside yourself, then you have conquered the whole universe. It is not Alexander the Great or Napoleon who have conquered the world, their conquest was only temporary. It was a carpenter's son, a cowherd boy. They are ruling the world; and they are able to do it because they went inside themselves.

What does it mean to go inside yourself? To go inside means to go away from earthly attachments, from ambition, from all your ideas and desires. Some may say that meditation is no better than dreaming; let a man do something, instead of merely sitting

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idle; everyone must work. But what is the hardest thing in the world? To give up work, or activity? How many can give up work? None. Hunger will drive you back. You cannot sit long in one place. Man as Mr. So-and-So, his nature is to work; but man as spirit is beyond all work. I am telling you to seek within this little mannekin the great man. But this is very hard, because to do so, you will have to give up all your pet ideas. People ask: Why go inside where it is all darkness; why not stay in the world which is lighted by the sun, moon, and stars? So ninety-nine per cent of mankind prefer to stay outside themselves and they go on and on in this physical universe. Therefore it is said in the Gita: "Out of thousands and thousands some one will go inside himself; and out of thousands who do, some one will find Me."

Some may go inside, but they meet that terrible enemy, the mind. Even Arjuna said: "The mind is so rebellious and hard to control that to curb it I consider as hard as to curb the wind." So against this you have to fight. How to fight. You must purify the mind. How to purify the mind? Develop love for God. By means of love we can do everything. If you love God with your whole heart, then it is very easy to give up. Love is a natural thing. Even an idiot can love. If you can direct your love towards spirit, it will lead you to spirit. It is these earthly attachments

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which hold you down like a captive balloon. You are tied to your earthly relations, tied to your money, tied to your ambition. But cut all these ties and at once you will go up. Just as a hungry baby runs to the mother, so you must increase your love for God; then you will go up towards God and you will realise Him. What will happen then? You will be the happiest man in the whole universe. You will be like a little child. The father and mother are slaves to the baby. It may go anywhere without any feeling of care or responsibility, but they must always take care of it. So if you can become the baby of God, you may be happier than even God Himself.

There is another path—that of discrimination; but it is very difficult. Only a few are intelligent enough to follow it. All have preached Bhakti. Christ, Mohammed, all have preached the path of devotion; but only two have preached the path of discrimination.—Buddha and Sankara. Buddha preached pure Jnana (the path of Wisdom); and what He taught was so difficult that few can understand it. They began to misunderstand as soon as He was dead. Sankara has preached a very definite path. First, He says, you must purify the mind. To do this there are four methods: Discriminating the real from the unreal. This you can do by science and by study of books. But modern science will not do this for you. You must study the Vedic

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science and learn to disentangle soul from matter. Second, you must cease to care for earthly happiness. You must control the senses. You must bear all sorts of difficulties without caring to remedy them. You must be dead to earthly enjoyments. You must have faith in the Scriptures as well as those who explain the Scriptures. You must not regard this world as your home. You are spirit and you must seek to return to spiritland.

True religion teaches, not how to go to heaven, but how to go to God. To do this you must give up this little self and realise the infinite Self, which may be called God. Man should not seek sensual enjoyments, but should seek that which leads him to God. There is a natural sensual desire in every man, but this should not be degraded to brutal desire. Desire is good, but it should not be misdirected. Health must be preserved because by means of this body we may realise God. Why should I eat? Why should I visit holy places? These will preserve the body and by this I shall be able to realise God. Why should I preserve these eyes? To see the perennial beauty of God.

What should be the duty of each individual soul? Is it the duty of every man to be a worker? No; but every man should struggle to know the Truth. The knowers of Truth have known that to be Truth, which is one without a second. Inside man is the true temple. The five *Koshas* (sheaths) are the five

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walls of the temple ; the heart is the secret shrine. Here God dwells. The end and aim of every man should be to realise Truth. But between Him and Truth there is a big barrier. What? The mind. To remove this barrier we must purify the mind. This must be done by self-exertion. A man will have to have great patience, great perseverance ; but when he persists and purifies the mind, he will break down all barriers and come face to face with the Supreme Truth. Then he will attain eternal peace and bliss.

THE TRIPLE QUEST

BHAGAVAN Sri Krishna in describing the real man, says that the real man is self-existent, uncreated by anyone, beginningless, endless, indestructible in every way, and infinite. He has no hunger, no desire, all-perfect, and being infinite he is all-knowing. That is the real man. But the real man is forgotten and in his place comes the false, apparent man, who believes himself to be weak, to be helpless, who is hungry and thirsty, having birth and death, and whose existence is very precarious. His idea is that he was born with this body and will die with this body. This mistake is the cause of all our miseries and our greatest effort should be to put down this blunder which has robbed us of our omnipotence and omniscience. The only way to get rid of it is to renounce all these mistakes which we call *Maya* and he who thus renounces is a *Sanyasin*. Whoever struggles with whole-souled determination to get rid of this mistake is a *Sanyasin*.

Everyone is really a *Sanyasin*, for everyone is constantly giving up in order to get happiness. There is not one who does not want to live and to be happy. Even the little ant is doing just what the greatest Yogi in a mountain cave is doing. What is it doing when it goes from one place to another? Is it not

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renouncing this place to go to that one? It comes to a grain of sand, stops and examines it, finds that it is not what it wants and gives it up to go in search of something better. So it moves on and on until it comes to a grain of sugar; then its journey ends for the time being, until hunger once more asserts itself. Thus it renounces one thing after another for something else. And how long will this little creature have to search? When will final rest come for it? When it will be able to reach an infinite amount of sugar? Then no matter how often hunger may rise, it will always find satisfaction; and perfect happiness will be realised. That is, only when it comes in contact with an infinite amount of bliss will its journey stop. That infinite amount of bliss is God. The Yogi is searching after the same thing.

When a man is young, he thinks that by worshipping his wife or his child, by seeking sense-pleasures or money or knowledge he will be happy. But this life is not very palatable. It cannot satisfy his hunger long; after a time he wants to go beyond this life, beyond body, senses and mind. The body has in it all sorts of desires, it has stored up from past experiences. When he goes back of the body to the mind, he finds it also little satisfactory and always restless, indeed, if we analyse this mind, we shall find it just like the little ant, searching here and there and never at

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rest. The mind too is full of desires and when the man discovers that these desires for sensual pleasures are the cause of all his miseries, he begins to doubt the validity of these pleasures. Then he says, as long as I believe that beautiful pictures, sweet sounds, name and fame can make me happy, then I shall have to cling to this body; as long as I entertain the idea that these sense-enjoyments can give me happiness, I shall have to be a slave to this body; I shall have to be born with it and die with it.

Is there no other happiness beside this that comes through the channel of the senses? Can that happiness not be found anywhere else? Why am I happy? A beautiful garland makes me happy, or a fine dish. But does the happiness come out of the garland or out of the dish? If I have a marble statue and give it a garland or a good dish, will it be happy? No, there must be some one in the statue to enjoy the flowers or the dish. So there must be some one in the body to enjoy the garland or the food. If I am sleeping and some one comes and sings my favourite tune, it does not give me pleasure because I am not in the ears and hence do not hear it. So I must be there to enjoy, I must feel that I am happy, that I enjoy.

If I put sugar on my tongue, it becomes dilated, a pleasant sensation comes and I am happy. If, on the contrary, I put quinine the saliva recedes, the tongue

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becomes contracted, the nerves go back, there is a tendency to throw it out, I feel unhappy. I must have to conclude from this that sugar is friendly to the tongue and quinine unfriendly. When a friend comes, you open your heart, show everything you have, and make him a part of you. When an enemy comes, what do you do? You shut up everything and keep wondering, "When will this fellow go?" Now when can friendship take place? When two people are of equal age and are one and the same in tendencies and opinions. So that sugar is friendly to the tongue shows that the sweetness which is in sugar is reciprocated by the tongue where there is also sweetness. If sugar is the cause of happiness, then the tongue too is also the cause of happiness, because as soon as sugar comes, the tongue shows its own nature; and when quinine comes, it hides itself, so the nature of the tongue is not bitterness, but sweetness. This sweetness therefore must belong to the self.

But what is the tongue? It is merely an instrument belonging to someone behind the tongue, and that someone is the Self. Enjoyment is indeed the very nature of the Self, it is the very nature of man.

Man is made up of enjoyment, just as quinine is made up of bitterness; and when he comes in contact with the same thing in nature, then he experiences joy. This shows that bliss is inside him, not outside. I do not open my heart to all sorts of people. Only when I find

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one of my own kind do I open it. Therefore if it opens at the approach of sweetness or enjoyment, it is evident that such must be my nature.

Man also finds out another thing. He says, "Yes, bliss is in me, but am I the body? Or am I only a dweller in the body?" Then when he analyses, he discovers that the body is merely a dwelling house in which he is living for a time, but that he is eternal by his own nature. He wanted to get rid of death. Now he learns that death has no more power to approach him any more than darkness has the power to approach the sun. So he realises his immortality. But in no *Loka* can immortality be realised. In all *Lokas* there is no safety from death. Then where to go? Now the difficulty is solved, I must go inside to the Self to be safe from death. I have also found that all bliss is inside myself, that my very nature is bliss.

These two ideas, therefore, have been realised,—I have bliss and I shall live forever. But there is a third thing—I wish knowledge. Now the mind is full of desires, for a desireless mind is no mind; but I am blissful and eternal so I cannot have desires; and as mind is limited, I cannot be mind. I must be something beyond both body and mind, for I am not born so I must be limitless. Mind knows many things, but there are many more that it does not know; therefore it can never get beyond the finite. Now

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whatever remains in the range of my consciousness must be known to me, just as whatever is within the range of the light of the lamp must be illumined by it; and as I am infinite, I must have infinite consciousness, so I must be all-knowing, infinite knowledge is mine.

Thus we see that the three ideals which not only angels and man, but also the lowest worm is seeking, can only be realised by going inside myself. How to go there? You need no money; you do not need to buy a ticket. Then why can I not go to myself at once? You may think that you can, but when you try, you find three almost impassable barriers; first, the world; second, the body; third, the mind. Can you go away from the world? Can you leave your family and friends? First, there is your wife, and your children. When you want to go, the sight of their weeping faces will prevent you. Arjuna said, why do I need to fight? Why must I kill my relatives and friends? If I am all-blissful, why can I not go off and just be happy in myself? He thought that Sri Krishna was self-contradictory in asking him to kill his own Guru, his own grand-father. "If you think *Jnana Marga* is the best, then why do you engage me in a dreadful action?" He asked. Sri Krishna replied, "Arjuna, what you think so very easy is not so easy?" And later Arjuna had to admit: "Yes, Krishna it is true, to conquer the mind is almost impossible."

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But if you cannot conquer the mind, you cannot go back to yourself. Who is the greatest conqueror, he who has conquered the whole world, or he who has conquered his own mind? So, Sri Krishna goes on to say, since it is so difficult to subdue the mind, it is better to work; work is rather easier. Therefore he preached *Karma Yoga* to him. But every work implies limitation, for who works? He who is in want. The rich man does not work because he has everything. Work is based on the idea of want. "So," Arjuna says, "the very idea of work is bad and yet you ask me to work?" "Yes," Sri Krishna explains, "work is bad, if it is based on want. But there is another kind of work which is called *Karma Yoga*." Do not work because you want anything, but work because you have hands to work, because all your organs were made to work. Therefore work, but without thought of the results. You can command your legs, your hands, your mind to do whatever you like, you cannot command the results. Outside this body you can command your wife, your children, your own household; you may, to a certain extent, command this microcosm, but you can never command the macrocosm.

You are finite, so you have finite mind; but He is infinite and His cosmic mind is infinite. His conclusions therefore are not the same as your conclusions, and that is the reason why you are always at logger-heads with

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God. That is the reason why you are always fighting against God. You weep and complain that things do not go your way; every one does it. When you thus fight, it goes by the name of ego in this country, and by the name of Satan in the West. When all fighting against God ceases and the will becomes one with His will, then we have Alwars and saints.

When the ego fights, God must go; when God fights, the ego must go. So go on working and leave the results to God. If the result is not palatable, do not get dissatisfied, for your tendencies are perverse and God's results are always good to every creature in the world. Therefore go on working and leave the results to God. If you work in this way, the ego will have to give way and you will become the most blissful of men.

"Learning this Karma Yoga from Me, Vivasvata taught it to Manu, Manu imparted it to his son. Gradually all the royal sages knew it one after another; but it was forgotten for long ages and now I am reviving it. Today I am revealing it to you, because you are my beloved and love me very dearly. Am I partial?" Sri Krishna asks. No, comes the answer; I do not tell it to every one because very few people will believe it. Nearly all men in the world will say, I have to earn my own bread by the sweat of my brow, what time have I for other work? Where is your God? Is he in the temple? If you do not give food to your God for one

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day you will die. Why shall I believe in such a God ? And you ask me to work without caring for the results ? Who will get them ? God ? Is he a good man ? Will He pay me properly ? But you are not like that, Sri Krishna says to Arjuna. We are friends, that means that we have cognate natures. And you love Me very much, you love none else but Me. Whoever will be a devotee, will hear this secret ; but to get it he will have to be an Arjuna (Arjuna was an incarnation of Nara). To learn this secret you must be a true disciple. The moment you can raise yourself to the place of Arjuna, you too will get Krishna as your friend. Why does not everyone get God as a teacher ? Because all are not true disciples. You must have God as your friend and no one else, and to have Sri Krishna as your friend you must be an Arjuna. Arjuna was a true disciple, therefore the Lord says, I will give this secret to you because you will be able to be benefitted by it.

People criticise because we keep knowledge secret, because we keep the Gayatri secret ; and they say that the Upanishads and all knowledge should be thrown broadcast. This is a foolish idea. If we deliver a lecture in English to one who does not understand English, would it not be very foolish ? Or if we show fine pictures to a blind man would it not be altogether senseless ? Today every boy can repeat the Upanishads, but has any Rishi or any Sage come out of it ?

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Sri Ramakrishna used to tell us that a parrot may learn the names of God and repeat them all day long; but when a cat comes, it forgets them all and utter its natural cry. Repeating verse by these people is just like the ignorant repetition of the parrot. To be a little conservative in communicating higher truths is therefore good.

Arjuna could not understand Sri Krishna. You are my contemporary, he said, even Yudhishtira and Bhima are elders, how then can you say that you taught this yoga to Vivasvat, who was born long before? How can I believe this? Well, my dear boy, Sri Krishna replied, many births have elapsed of yourself and myself; I know them all and you don't know them. Why? Because I am God and you are a man. We look the same but there is this difference. What is it to be a man? What is it to be God? God is the master of His body and mind and man is not. Man is he who identifies himself with his body. Man is he whom body imprisons, whom mind imprisons; is he who is a slave to his body, a slave to his mind; is he whom mind and body overpower. In my babyhood, Sri Krishna continues, I was as much all-knowing as when I am grown up, but you are a baby even when you are grown. Nothing can overpower my mind or my senses; whereas you are, you are almost overpowered all the time. This knowledge is inside of you as in Me, but in Me there is illumination and you

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are in darkness. When illumination will come, at once you will know that you had many births.

But can a man know his past lives? Yes. Yogic philosophy tells that everyone can know them. All that you have to do is to control your mind and senses. You must be self-helping. What does self-helping mean? What sort of life must you live? You must not depend on anyone. You must not put on any clothes, because for that you must have to depend on a weaver. So you must betake yourself to the jungle, clothe yourself in the bark of trees and live on leaves. Then when this world is wiped out, other lives will rise up. Anyone can do this. The only thing necessary is that this would be darkened.

IS A BELIEF IN TRANSMIGRATION CONSISTENT WITH REASONING ?

“**E**VERY effect must have a cause,” is the universal belief based upon observation and experiment. Something can never come out of nothing. People there are who hold that in the beginning there was nothing but one God—one without a second, and that by Him all this universe has been created ; that although He is one without a second, still He is the father of all varieties ; that although there is no variety in Him, who is one only, yet through His all-powerful will, variety, which did not exist, came into existence, and hence that something has come out of nothing. These people labour under a great mistake when they hold such an abnormal view, for they contradict themselves. They have unfortunately no power to comprehend the real meaning of what they say. For when they say, that God has created all this through His all-powerful will, they supply that God with a will which can do all. Can we imagine a man teaching Shakespeare who has not learnt the English language at all ? The very fact that he is able to teach Shakespeare shows that he is not only the master of the English language, but has deeply studied the dramatist before hand. No work can be done by any being here unless he has already fully qualified himself

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for it. Human mind can never reasonably believe that an idiot has invented a new machine which requires the skill and energy of a great man of genius for its construction. So when we say, that God has created this universe, through His almighty nature, thereby we have already assumed that in that nature of God the necessary qualifications which are necessary for creating, preserving, and destroying are already there. The atoms which are necessary for bringing into manifestation all the innumerable natural phenomena, which people infinite space, through eternity, are merely distinct, invisible, and subtle entities before their state of manifestation into phenomena. So in their primal state they remain latent and unmanifested, and the will of God breaks open the shell of their latency, and manifests them into innumerable kinds of form, touch, taste, smell, and sound which constitute the entire cosmos. These unmanifested atoms are what we call the nature of God, and the nature of man is in no way separate from him, since all his activities either physical or mental constitute the living and manifested man having name and form. Similarly the Creator, the Preserver, and the Destroyer of the Universe is in no way separate from the power of creation, preservation and destruction which constitute his nature. If you hold that God is even separate from His almighty nature, I will only tell you, that it is not the idea of God which is in vogue amongst all classes of people. That is the

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only the monopoly of the Upanishadic sages of India ; for the ordinary human mind, nay, for human mind in general it is simply incomprehensible, being beyond all thought and language. "These eight are my eight different natures," says Bhagavan Sri Krishna, "the earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, egoism, and intellect." Such a concrete God is what every human mind can comprehend and what is beyond this idea, is also beyond all idea of creation, preservation, and destruction, beyond all idea of space, time and causation. We are not dealing with that supreme entity, the changeless One, whom the sages call *Brahman*. We are now dealing with the popular idea of God. The Hebrew and the Christian scripture runs thus. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light : and there was light." (Genisis, I 1, 2, 3.) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The same was in the beginning with God, and all things were made by Him ; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life and the life was the life of man." (St. John I 1, 2, 3, 4.) These two passages in the Hebrew and Christian scripture give us no clue to conclude that something has come out of nothing, since we can get the most rational explanation

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by making all the laws subservient to God's infinite and all-powerful will, as we have just now seen. For what are atoms? They are the invisible and most subtle particles of matter. Have they any form or magnitude? They must have, otherwise, how is it possible for them to bring forth a form by their union. Forms only can bring forth forms. As we have seen no form here which is not liable to change, so it is but logical to conclude that an atomic form, however subtle and invisible that may be, must be liable to change. So it is a mere unwarranted hypothesis on our part, to hold that atoms are changeless. Pure reasoning, denies that property to it and says that no atom can be changeless. But the idea of change always depends upon a corresponding idea of changelessness. So the idea of matter must depend upon something that does not change. But it is not necessary that a changeless entity should depend upon a changing phenomena; as the phenomena may come and go, but the changeless space is eternally there. So whatever is changeless is independent, and whatever is changing is dependent upon an independent entity. God is independent, and therefore unchangeable, but the desire or will in Him is always changing. Hence, desire or will must be regarded as dependent upon the independent God. Atoms have just now been shown to be dependent and constantly changing but being dull and dead they cannot be the same

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as desire, which is mental action. It is also a fact that desire cannot exist independent of perceptions, and perception cannot exist independent of matter. So desire is indissolubly connected with matter or atoms. We have seen that desire and atoms are analogous in their character and now we see that they are indissolubly connected. So desire has two sides; the atoms constitute its material side and the mind-in-itself constitutes its mental or spiritual side. As when the sun shines all transparent, and smooth surfaces reflect the sun and appear to be as so many little suns emitting heat and rays, similarly when the spirit of God shines upon the myriads of sleeping and dull atoms they take the form of will, thought and feeling, become active and alive, and appear as good as God himself—not an independent and changeless God, but a God with infinite will, activity and power. This is the idea of God which a human mind can well grasp, and which alone goes by the name of God. So an orthodox Christian has no right to say that God has created this universe out of nothing, mindful of the true demands of his rational nature which alone enable him to believe in a God. It is always a fact that there can never be any blind faith, that is, a faith which has no previous reasoning behind to back it up.

The reasoning must be there, however perverse that may be, for no man, however dull, can ever escape

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the hands of the two questions, "how" and "why", and he can never rest satisfied, until they are answered, however wrongly it may be. Reasoning is the especial characteristic of man, and those who overlook the rightful demand of such a divine nature that distinguishes them from the lower order of animals, really bring themselves to that abject level, either wilfully or unconsciously. So we should not do or say anything irrational.

Now let us try to find out by means of reasoning the proper scope and limit of reasoning itself. Reasoning is always limited by relativity; and beyond the idea of dual existence relativity cannot go; that is, there must be at least two things or ideas upon which reasoning must be based. The seer and the seen must be there to see or know or reason, otherwise it cannot exist. Form, touch, taste, smell, and sound are its materials, and through its discriminative faculty based upon its relative nature, it always tries to classify them into the duals, right or wrong, good or bad, pleasurable or painful, hot or cold &c. Hence it can never go beyond the five senses and when it does so, it ceases to exist. For the senses are the gateways of all knowledge, and all knowledge is merely the outcome of reasoning, which only comes into existence by reaction, when the mind has been acted upon by something external by finding its way through one of the senses.

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Hence it is clear that reasoning can never live independent of the organisms; it is essentially corporeal; and never a simple thing but always a compound. Therefore whatever is cognised by the reasoning mind can never be that absolute unit existence, which is beyond the pale of reasoning. So we have now found out the proper scope and limit of our reasoning faculty or mind. It is always a relative entity and has nothing to do with absolute existence. It is always bound by space, time and causation. When an external object enters through the gateway of one of the senses, passes through a system of waves and thus reaches the brain centre, and acts upon the mind behind, a reaction takes places in the mind itself, and this reaction is known, as knowledge. We then become conscious of that thing and then come discrimination and classification which are brought about by the reasoning faculty. When reasoning has done its function, full knowledge of the thing comes, and we are said to know the thing.

All these considerations show that true knowledge of a thing altogether depends upon correct mode of reasoning, which, in its turn, depends upon the perfect tone and order of our organism, as well as the unimpeded and clear contact of the organs with their objects. So direct perception or experience is the only source of our knowledge. Such a knowledge, once got remains garnered within a certain receptacle in us, we call memory. This

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memory again enables us to perceive things, through another process of reasoning, which we call, inference. Experience has shown us, that wherever there is fire, there is smoke ; we retain this fact in our memory ; and thus whenever we see smoke afterwards, it is natural for us to conclude that there is fire behind. This memory is helped to infer by an innate belief in the uniformity of the law of nature in ourselves. There is another source of knowledge, which is virtually as good as direct perception itself, what is not of an ordinary human being with five senses, but of some superhuman beings who are fortunate to possess more senses than five. We have no right to disbelieve them, until we practically prove their falsity by trying to develop that sense in ourselves through the very processes which enabled them to develop that sense. The blind man who cannot see that there is a great pit before him on his way, will be the more blind if he does not believe in the man who sees the pit and warns him about it, for, by not believing, the poor fellow is sure to fall down into the pit and break his limbs.

There is a great talk amongst some of our modern educated people, against this kind of getting knowledge which they have named transcendental, that is, going beyond the cognition of their five senses, and made it as good as unfit to be relied upon. These people will never care to see for themselves by practically taking trouble

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to go through those processes which enable them to do so, and invest them with the power of transcendental sight. Their obstinacy in holding light all such super-human experiences will serve them nothing better than the obstinacy of the blind man in not believing about the existence of a pit on his way, simply because he himself cannot see it. But fortunately there is no such obstinate blind man in this world, for every blind man recognises his own weakness and therefore is humble enough to ask the help of others. Whereas, the so-called experientialists are blinded by so much vanity that they have no power to detect their own weakness, and deeming themselves to be perfectly right and almost all-knowing, never care to avail themselves of the experiences of higher men, and prefer to die like a common beast which also believes in nothing but what it directly perceives through one or other of its five senses. It is a patent fact that a learned man sees more in a thing than a common uneducated person and sometimes the experience of the former leads him to harbour exactly an opposite idea about a certain thing to what the uneducated possesses regarding it. No scientific man will ever be able to convince a country clown about the truthfulness of the heliocentric theory. To the latter the sun always goes round the earth instead of the earth going round the sun. But fortunately there is no such perverse and obstinate clown on this earth as

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does not admit his own littleness, and is not ready to accept the conclusions of those learned people whom he always holds to be much more learned than himself. So an ignorant man has decidedly this great advantage over his blind brother, the pedant, who, poor man, has not been vouchsafed with the divine quality of humility which alone enables a man to gather more and more knowledge and become wiser. "Rain water", says Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, "always glides down from high grounds, and gathers in lower levels; similarly the holy instructions of the sages enter and gather into the hearts of the meek and lowly, and have no place in hearts puffed up with vanity." When Dharma in the form of a Yaksha asked Yudhishtira how to grow wise, the latter replied, a man can only become wise by sitting at the feet of his elders, and learning from them by pleasing them with constant service. Unfortunately most of our so-called learned men of the present day, want in that humble attitude of mind, and that is the reason why they are far less useful to our society than the sturdy country clown whose honest labour supplies the country with food, who, although rough and rude to look at, is still soft, docile, and humble within.

There was a time when the noble-hearted, and aspiring young children of India had that noble kind of humility in them which led them to believe in the words of her sages, so much so that they believed more in the

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latter than in themselves. And in course of time, those very young men lived to be sages themselves, leading and exhorting in their turn, another band of young men to reach that eminence. India was in her flush time then. Those glorious days may again return, if instead of neglecting and looking down upon their ancient sages the modern young Indians learn to revere them, and sit at their feet to learn. The reasoning based upon the knowledge, gathered by believing in the experiences of these superhuman beings, these Gods on earth, these old sages of ours, is called *agama* or the Scriptural Testimony. These divine experiences are surely much more ennobling than the lower experiences through the organism. If we are meek, wise, and fortunate enough to put our entire faith in the experiences of our sages, we will not at all find it difficult in believing in the transmigration of soul which they all unanimously hold; and we will find this present life of ours only a tiny chapter in a big volume whose beginning as well as end is the one eternal God, who is the permanent background of all this immense and eternal universe which rises, exists, and dissolves in Him, to rise, stay and vanish again and again. Then if I be wretched and down-trodden, kicked and tyrannised, I will never fail to find consolation in the thought that better days are yet in reserve for me in a future state of existence. Then death will lose its sting, and instead of fearing poverty,

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I will gladly court its embrace hoping for better days. Then men and women will struggle hard to lead moral and pious lives which alone can give them all peace and bliss. So the best proof for the reincarnation of the soul, sanctioned by higher reasoning is the testimony of the sages.

We can have no direct perception of any state previous to our birth or subsequent to our death, as the organisms with which we are to perceive, have no existence before or after our present life. So this kind of lower experience has no power to unravel the mystery connected with our conditions beyond this life, and the higher experiences of the sages alone can furnish us the most conclusive proofs regarding palingenesis.

Now let us turn to the other proof left to us, I mean, the proof by Inference. Much of our knowledge we always gather from the inferential process, although it may not be certain in many cases. The life of inference lies in the belief in uniformity of Natural Laws, as we have already seen. Experience helps this belief which, in its turn, helps the belief that they are indissolubly connected with one another in human nature, and enable us to get all our earthly knowledge. Beyond this earth, they cannot safely lead us. So it is impossible to get through inference a full and satisfactory proof about a thing which transcends this earth; and does not the question which we are going to discuss, go beyond this

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organism and the universe reflected in it? But, however, let us see how far inference will help us in understanding in the transcendental experience of the sages.

In the first place, we have seen, that something can never come out of nothing. The living and conscious human organism is something, therefore it must have come from something. Where was it previous to its birth? It was in the womb of the mother, in a subtle state. Where was it previous to its coming into the womb? It was in the father in germ or seed state. As in the mustered-like seed of a banyan tree, the future gigantic tree lies concealed, so in the seed of the father, the future man or woman with all his or her activities physical and mental, lies concealed. Whence has the seed come? It has come from the father, and it was in the father, nay, it was the father himself previous to its birth. So the present living and conscious organism was at one time moving and living as its father the author of its being. Similarly the organism of that father was in his father, and so on. So if a living man traces his origin, he will find it to be carried behind to an infinite series of existences. Hence it is clear, that a living man is really existent without beginning; he does not begin to exist from his birth, but he has been living from time without beginning. If we hold that all things proceed from God, then the man that

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is living and moving before you was at one time in God, nay was God Himself, as by hypothesis there was only one existence, one without a second ; and if God is without beginning and end, the man before you is also without beginning and end. What though he may not have any issue ? He, as God, is living through eternity. As the tree remains latent in the seed, and still no tree is visible in it, similarly, the man in the seed-state is altogether unmanifested, and unconscious. Previous to this state the seed was the same as the father, and therefore, at that time, it was manifested and conscious. So manifestation and consciousness are preceded and followed by their opposites which, in their turn, are preceded and followed by *their* opposites. As the day follows the night and night follows the day, in that eternal being, man, consciousness and unconsciousness eternally follow each other. The intense love of parents for their children clearly proves that they are in no way separate from their children. If the child is sick, the parents suffer much more than the child sometimes, and when it is impossible for a suffering baby to take medicine, the Doctor prescribes it to the mother, who takes it herself and suckles the child with the milk of her breast, thus medicined. If we consider all this we cannot help concluding that the children are the other selves of the parents. Thus we have seen, how from God, the man springs, and to God at last, he is destined to go. This is

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one answer to the question whether the soul transmigrates or not.

The evolution theory of Darwin is a mere guess, for no experiment has as yet been done to show that a flying fish can be converted into a bird. And even if it be taken for granted, we will have to admit that something must have been involved beforehand to bring about the later evolution. The amoeba with numerous changes of form into which it can throw itself, presupposes the involved power in a previous state, otherwise we will have to admit something coming out of nothing, which is absurd. Nothing is lost here in this universe: this is a scientific truth. When we admit the existence of a certain thing, it must have existed without a beginning and is going to exist forever. So if the amoeba has developed itself, through a series of onward transformations, into a man, the man must have been involved in it, and if the man is destined to become an angel, and if the angel is destined to lose himself in God and thus be God, God must have been involved in the amoeba to be evolved again. This may be another hypothetical explanation to palingenesis.

Children are born with a natural fear of death. This fear cannot be in them unless they have previously experienced the pangs of death. That proves the existence of their previous lives. But as we have seen that their previous lives were the same as those of

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their parents, it is natural for them to fear death, because they have been experiencing the pangs of death without beginning. It is a fact that the child inherits most of the characteristics of its parents. But in some cases, this does not hold true. We have seen that sometime the children of pariahs become so great that they claim worship even from the best of Brahmanas, as is the case with many of the *Alvars* and *Nayanars* of Southern India, and devotees of Northern India such as Haridasa, the Yavana and others. The child in this case has not inherited the characteristic of his ancestors. We shall know of the Pauranica narrative of Prahlada, the infant devotee. He was the descendent of a line of kings who had been holding Vishnu in utter abhorrence. But exactly opposite was the character of Prahlada who is regarded as one of the best of the Vaishnavas. The theory of heredity, which we have considered previously, does not hold here, in as much as, according to that theory a horse can never produce a man, nor man can ever produce a horse; a Brahmana can never produce a Pariah, nor a Pariah can ever produce a Brahmana. When a theory is not sufficient to account for facts it must be regarded as insufficient and imperfect, however sufficient and perfect it may appear, and we must prefer another which can explain those facts.

One can never deny that one's body has been inherited from one's ancestors, whose origin is from time

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without beginning. But the dweller in the body may not necessarily come from the Author of the Authors of the body, as has just now been shown. Hence we cannot but admit two parallel lines of existence, material and spiritual. Man is a mixture of matter and spirit. Spirit is the subject or the seer, matter is the object or the seen. Hence they are diametrically opposite in their character. Whatever is material in us we inherit from our fathers and whatever is spiritual in us is our own; we do not inherit that from any one, that being our very essence. We are merely dwellers in our bodies, which are as so many tools in our hands with which we shape our destinies. It is a fact that every man is reaping the fruits of his own actions, and according to the merits and demerits of his action, he will have a good or bad body, or dwelling-house to live in. If a pariah lives an exceptionally good life, he cannot be born as a pariah again. It is natural for us to conclude that he must be promoted to the holy body of a true Brahmana. One who draws five rupees a month, will have to live in a dingy den, but when the same man, by means of a certain meritorious act, is suddenly promoted to the post of one hundred rupees a month, it is natural for him to change his den for an airy and neat dwelling-house surrounded by a nice-looking garden. Similarly, if a Brahmana leads an exceptionally immoral life, he will have to come down and take his birth in the

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house of a filthy pariah, nay, sometimes he may go down lower still, and find his place only amongst the lower animals. People committing heinous offences are sent to jail to be punished there, and those doing works of great merit are rewarded sumptuously, in the shape of titles and preferments. Similarly when a man does all sorts of a evil actions and with impunity tyranises over his fellow-brethren it is most right that he should be sent to God's house of correction, popularly known as hell, to expiate the evil effects of his past misdeeds, and when the unrewarded merit of a good man passes away unnoticed from the earth, a divine reward is what we all wish him to have from the hand of the Most High, which we know is Heaven.

The living organism is the fit receptacle for a soul to live in. This we inherit from our parents as a reward or punishment for our moderately good or bad past actions inasmuch as the body is healthy and pure, or filthy and diseased. Heaven or hell we may get here, inasmuch as we are wealthy, happy and good, or impoverished, wretched and wicked. But there are actions of so great a merit that we cannot imagine anything here as can prove a proper reward for them, and so the existence of another locality called heaven, is therefore natural for us to admit. Similarly there are offences, so very heinous and horrible, that there can be no proper punishment for them here, and therefore it is also

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natural for us to admit the existence of a separate locality, known as hell. If a man lives the life of a beast the body of a beast should be his proper inheritance. This is also the opinion of our sages, and I can quote several mantrams from the Upanishads, and several verses from the Gita, the Puranas, and the Itihasas to uphold this view, which is perfectly rational. But I desist from doing so, referring my indulgent audience to those passages which are to be found everywhere all through our scriptures.

Some objections are raised against this view which it is our duty to meet and refute. The first objection is that if you hold our souls to be immortal and having living bodies to dwell in previous to this life, why do we not remember them? In reply we ask the objector if he can narrate all the incidents connected with his babyhood in this life. If he tries he will not be able to remember all the incidents of even yesterday through which he has passed. When he cannot do so, it is not possible for him to remember the incident connected with his past life. We have heard about and even may have, people who have altogether forgotten most of the things of their early life, after their recovery from the shock of virulent disease. To remember a thing we should always compose and concentrate our mind. But are we allowed to do so? As soon as the child comes out of the womb, our atmosphere proves very much inclement to it, and it cries

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out in pain feeling a kind of pinching sensation all over its mollusc-like, soft and tiny organism. Hunger and thirst attack him, and necessarily the mind becomes so much distracted and disturbed that it is but natural for it to forget all about its past life. The son of man, ever since his birth, is engaged in fighting against his environments and he has no leisure left for him to consider about matters other than what is strictly connected with the incessant craving of this life. Is it not natural for him therefore to forget all about his past? The terrible shock which the embryo experiences when it is pushed out of the womb to be thrown into the outer world is alone sufficient to make it forget everything connected with its past existences. We have heard of people who could remember all the incidents of their past lives, such as Lord Buddha. They are called *Jatismaras* or knowers of their past lives. This is only possible when a Yogi having still some desires left in him takes his birth here. As his mind has full mastery over his organism neither the shock at the time of his birth, neither hunger, thirst, nor cold can have any influence over him, and he can easily remember all about his past lives. Bhagavan Patanjali says, "*Apratigraha prati-shthayam janmakathanta sambodah*," that is, when a man is fully and perfectly independent, wanting no help from any being here in this universe, he may know all about his past lives. This is only possible for a man who is a

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perfect master of his environments, as well as, his organism and mind. Nature cannot frighten him at the time, he is beyond her reach altogether, and thus left to himself he has and can easily bring all the incidents of his past lives before his mind.

The next objection is that it is impossible for a human being to be born as a horse in his next incarnation. It is a patent fact, that man can only bring forth men, and not horses. We have already answered that objection, by affirming that the human soul gets its body according to its action and tendencies. But to this, if the objector says, why then does the man, born as a horse, lose all his human nature and get all the nature of a horse instead. In reply, we say that a being inherits its nature from its parents, and moreover the shock at the time of its birth, makes it forget that it has been a human being before, as has already been explained. Now the objector may say, if it is a fact that the human soul is ever progressing, as a boy is wiser than a baby, a young man is wiser than a boy, a full grown man is wiser than a young man &c., then how can it be possible for a soul, after its reasoning power has been matured in manhood, to be born as a baby again, in its next incarnation? Our reply is that it is not a fact that a man ever continues to be wiser with the increase of his age. Extreme old age is as good as childhood, many may have seen that.

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Men are born with certain tendencies. No two men have the same tendency. And if tendencies are the results of repeatedly doing certain series of actions, we can only account for the tendencies in babies by admitting a past state of existence wherein they have acquired these tendencies.

If you ask an old man, when he is healthy and jolly, if he really thinks himself old at the time, he is sure to answer you in the negative, and why? Because a really healthy man is he who never thinks that he has a body. Consciousness of body does not come unless a man feels some pain somewhere in it, such as a head-ache, an ulcer with stinking matter in it &c. And the healthy and jolly old man having thus no consciousness of his old body, can never think himself to be old at the time. This proves that the dweller in the body has no connection with the body.

We have already seen that a man is a mixture of subject and object, the knower and the known. If we try to study the real character of the subject, we at once come to know its immortal nature. Subject or soul being the knower, all knowledge is gathered in it. It is the receptacle of all knowledge. The soul has the power of choosing either to entertain or drive away all ideas, and still live. That proves that it is independent of the mind which deals only in ideas. Mind is constantly changing with the change of the ideas, but the soul being

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beyond the mind, is not changing when the latter is changing. The soul is the one changeless background upon which all the innumerable and ever shifting mental phenomena rest, as space is the one changeless background of all the innumerable physical phenomena. Now whatever is changeless must be permanent, or immortal, for, death means a sudden change in a certain course of existence. Hence the soul must be immortal and independent. Now we can clearly understand that the human being existed even before his birth, and is going to exist even after his death. The fear of death and many other tendencies in a baby prove that it had a previous incarnation wherein it had to do those actions which have resulted in those tendencies and had to experience the pangs of death, the faint impression of which gives it that instinctive fear of death. Even the young ones of lower animals, such as monkeys, rhinoceros &c., evince wonderful instinctive knowledge which can only be accounted for, by admitting a previous state of existence. For instance, the baby-monkey, before it fully comes out of the womb, puts forth its hands first and firmly catches hold of the bough of a tree, while the mother jumps to a branch in the opposite direction leaving the new-born baby dangling down the bough. The baby-rhinoceros runs away from its mother as soon as it is born, to protect itself from being torn away by the sharp tongue of its mother

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who also, at that time, becomes blind providentially, cannot run after her baby. After five or seven days the mother and the baby meet when the latter has got its skin tough enough to bear the caresses of its dam. The explanation of these instincts lies only in the admittance of the existence of similar previous lives.

All these considerations corroborate the instruction of our sages and the more we shall be able to use our reasoning faculty rightly, the more we shall be able to understand those Gods on Earth. Science and philosophy, instead of being antagonistic to Theology are great helps to many to understand the latter. Fortunate are they indeed who have an innate love, regard, and veneration for those glorious beings of past, prehistoric times, whose abodes were in the solitary forests and mountain caves of ancient India, that afforded them ample shelter and help for all those higher thoughts that carried them beyond the boundary line of space, time, and causation. May we all have our highest regards for them, if we at all try to improve ourselves in any way here.

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WHEN the blind king Dhritarashtra exhorted his favourite son Duryodhana to live contented with his kingdom which had fallen to his share, with all those royal luxuries which followed him at every step, with his hundred brothers and innumerable relatives and friends ready to die for him if necessary, and with his vigorous youth and great capacity for all earthly enjoyments which flowed towards him from all directions more profusely than he could ever manage with, the answer that Duryodhana gave his fond parent clearly reveals the characteristic of the human mind. His reply was: "That mean-minded fellow is looked down upon by the wise, who does not aspire to dignify himself simply because he has got good food and clothing. Contentment, vanity, mercy and fear destroy all hope of prosperity. These qualities only disqualify a man to rule a kingdom, O Bharata."

Man is born with a restless discontented nature. Unlike the lower animals, he cannot rest satisfied with any limited amount of power, knowledge or wealth, however vast that may be in its own way. Every man is aspiring to raise himself higher than where he is. A millionaire wants to amass more millions, a man well-versed in all branches of knowledge does not rest satisfied,

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but wants more, wants to put his theories into practice. "Absolute rest is gained only in the grave," says a Western thinker. Human life is indeed a constant struggle against whatever tries to impede its onward flow. Here perhaps some may object by saying that a lazy man hates such struggles and therefore he is an exception to the rule. But in sooth a lazy man is much more active than a really active man; for an extremely active man can at most build a cottage in a few hours on solid ground whereas, a lazy fellow can build a big castle in the air within a second. Bhagavan Sri Krishna says, "No one can live for a moment without action." Every man has to act, involuntarily forced by his nature. In the case of a lazy man his desire to enjoy better things does not cease. Passions and appetites have more dominion over him than over an active man, but he is so much overpowered by sloth that instead of endeavouring to gratify them he somehow or other manages to live simply by imagining them. The wish to enjoy better, to know more, to be more and more free from all impediments which prevent them from attaining those things which they ardently desire, to be more a master than a slave, is the one raging passion in all human beings.

Now, therefore, it is clear that to be a real master and not to be a slave is the one aim towards which all humanity is moving. The full or partial realisation of

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this end depends upon the intensity of the desire as well as the effort to attain to it. No one wants to be put down or discomfited in any way. The masterly spirit in man always wants to assert itself. This shows that in our real nature we are masters. Although circumstances have so much bound us hand and foot that we are compelled to believe that we depend on this thing or that thing, this man or that man for our existence, still we cannot help thinking that we are really masters. A slave in a court is master in his own house. The common servant of your house, drawing a very paltry sum every month, which is hardly enough to keep body and soul together, is a prince in his own cottage in a far away wayside village. The intense bliss which he enjoys in the sweet smiles of his children and family, that passive mood of highest felicity in which he abandons himself when his little boys and girls lisp out to him all those sweet stories and incidents which they have gathered and learnt in his absence and have been cherishing in their bosoms to impart to him, can in no way fall short of any enjoyments which fall to the lot of a monarch; nay, in many cases these natural enjoyments of his far surpass all those royal enjoyments which are more or less artificial.

So, however badly circumstanced we may be, the circumstances have no power to completely obliterate our naturally independent nature. We are sure to assert ourselves at some time or other. Surroundings

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merely hide our real nature from our view and force us to believe what we are not. The clouds may thicken and thicken, the sun may be removed from our sight for days and days together, still neither the clouds have any power to soil the sun in any way as they are far, far away from it, nor is the sun destined to lie hidden behind these layers of mist for ever.

Cuckoos do not know how to build their own nests. So when the season comes for them to lay their eggs they search for the nest of a crow where there are some newly laid eggs of the latter. In the absence of the crow-mother the cuckoo stealthily takes possession of the nest, destroys all the crow-eggs, and lays her own in their place which are exactly similar to those of the crow and flies away. The mother-crow comes and sees there the same eggs, and not knowing that her own eggs have been destroyed, rests perfectly satisfied. Through her motherly care those eggs are properly hatched, and in time the young cuckoos burst out of them. The young cuckoos think the crow to be their mother, and the crow too thinks them to be her offsprings. For some time the cuckoos think themselves to be crows, and move and associate with the crows, but within a few days the nature of the cuckoo asserts itself, and at last cuckoos become cuckoos and leave the company of crows. No circumstance however unfavourable is able to put down nature. Such is

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the case with men too. The man may be a slave to a brother man who regards himself as the master of the slave, but, as we have seen, no man can be absolutely a slave; and it is also a fact that no tyrant can ever be a real master. *Æsop* was a slave, but he lives in his fables, and rules and guides men through the moral path laid down by him, and is destined to live and rule as long as men will praise morality more than immorality, whereas his employer or master has long been swallowed up in the gulf of oblivion. This shows how a slave is a master and a master a slave. Time lovingly carries *Æsop* on its head and presents him to all generations, and thus has become a slave to him, but his master had to share a completely different lot in as much as the very same Time instead of serving him has completely smashed him under its all-destroying feet, and thus put an end to him, so that no one now knows his name even.

These considerations clearly show that since it is our nature to rule, it is always better to give this nature full scope to develop itself, to evolve masters and not slaves of ourselves. It will be my duty to point out to you how that can be effected.

From our very childhood we hate restraint. No conventionalism, no formality, no etiquette, no manner can bind a child. The children of the world profess

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no religion, admit no restrictions and therefore have no caste; they are all of them of the same cast for their characters are always and everywhere the same. Now the question is, should we leave our children to do whatever they like, for by so doing we give them perfect liberty and thus virtually make them masters and not slave to others? It is true that a child does not love restraint, but that does not prove that it is not restricted or circumscribed on all sides. Circumstanced as we are, we are bound hand and foot in all directions.

We may love liberty, but we have no liberty. We may love pleasure, but there is no pleasure for us which we can get without undergoing great labour, trouble and pain. We may hate pain, but pain is the cheapest thing in the market of this world. We may hate it, but it will intrude on us without our consent. Such being the case it will not be very safe to present a passive mood to all such intrusions. When pleasure is so rare a commodity here it will not do for us to sit idly, for in that case we shall become a plaything of misery. We must struggle hard to put down this misery and court and win pleasure to our side which we love so much. A human child is the most forlorn and helpless creature on this earth, and so if it is allowed to be left alone to itself to do whatever it likes, is there any doubt that it will be kicked out of existence by those enemies, ever

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on the alert to work woe,—enemies such as ignorance, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, physical and mental weaknesses, diseases and lots of other things? When a child is incessantly under the watchful gaze of all these evil-doers, and when it is itself unable to resist them, it is our duty to keep it in a place which is beyond their reach. As when mosquitoes are very rife we save ourselves from them by drawing a curtain around us, or as when a plant is very young we put a fence round it to save it from being pulled out by mischievous urchins, or grazed by the cattle, so we should limit the liberty of a child to prevent its falling a prey to the enemies mentioned just now. This is the reason why a child should be made to go through a course of strict discipline, before he is allowed to have any liberty and as he proves stronger gradually, under such discipline, we can give him liberty more and more, little by little. When he is strong enough to resist all evils, to hold his own ground against all temptations and promptings of nature, he should be allowed full liberty. When the plant grows up to be a tree it shelters lots of cattle from the sun or rain, supplies them with its leaves and tender twigs to feed upon; yet one of these could have grazed it out of existence when it was very young.

So we see the efficacy of sending our children to school. The boy or girl may not like restraint of any kind, but that is necessary for his or her own safety and

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the attainment of future liberty and mastership. When a boy is made to go through a certain discipline, in course of time he becomes habituated to that; and that habit becomes his nature. At last, what at first appeared to him to be discipline and restriction, becomes part and parcel of his own nature. He does not hate it any more but rather finds that he cannot do without it. He then gets a character, and as all our strength lies in our character alone, that boy becomes strong to resist what may come in his way.

If we want to be proof against all sorts of temptations we must first have a character of our own, and that character can only be gained by sacrificing one's own liberty and forcing one's own self to go through a regular course of good discipline for a certain number of years. When the discipline will be natural to him, that is to say, when it will not appear to him as a tyrannical and detestable master, but rather a most loving friend without whom he cannot do even for a moment, then he shall know that his character has been formed. So long as we have no decided preference for anything we are at the mercy of our senses. So long as we have no ideal to follow we will have to heed to the calls of our passions and appetites; a characterless man is an abject slave to all worldly enjoyments. Whatever appears to him to be pleasant at the first sight, that he will blindly follow without caring for the

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after-effects which may sometimes lead him even to death. Passions and appetites have been compared to the insatiable fire; the more fuel you put into it the more lustily will it burn, and the more fuel will it want; no one can appease the hunger of fire. Therefore those who think that desires can be conquered through the gratification thereof labour under a great mistake. However a man may stuff his stomach with all good and luxurious things, after the lapse of a few hours, it will crave for something more. There is no food here, on this earth, eating which we shall hunger no more, there is no drink here drinking which we shall thirst no more. Let us cite an example here to illustrate this insatiable nature of our passion.

In olden days there was a king whose name was Yayati. One day he went out to hunt. Following a deer he was led away into the heart of a forest. All his retinue fell far back and he was altogether left alone in that deep forest. The sun had passed the meridian line and he felt himself thirsty; so wanting to drink some water he cast his eyes in all directions to find out a well or a pond wherefrom he might quench his thirst. Going a little further he discovered a well and was very glad to hurry towards it so that he might slake his thirst the sooner. But what was his astonishment when in the place of water he was in quest of, he saw a beautiful half-clad, helpless maiden weeping in

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utter dejection of spirit! He forgot his thirst in her distress and was anxious to rescue her from that dark den. He let down a cloth and told her to catch hold of it. She did so and was at once pulled out of the well. On enquiry he learnt that she, Devayana, was the daughter of the great sage Sukracharya the guru of the Daityas, and that she was reduced to that plight by the wicked daughter of the king of the Daityas, named Sarmishtha. Hearing this, the king led her to her father who, hearing the wickedness of the daughter of his disciple, at once called him to his presence, and told him all about the mischief of his daughter, and also threatened him that unless his own daughter, was propitiated by him he would go away from his kingdom that very moment. The king of the Demons did not want to lose so great a sage and so he wanted to know what it was that could conciliate Devayana. At which Devayana said that if his daughter would consent to be her handmaid the rest of her life she would be appeased. The king agreed to it, and Sarmishtha was accordingly given as a handmaid to Devayana. Now the goodness of Yayati was rewarded by Sukracharya by uniting him with Devayana, and the married couple with their handmaid went to their own kingdom. In course of time Devayana had two children from him. As they were one day walking in the garden three other beautiful children came running and address-

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sed Yayati as their father. At this Devayana wanted to know who they were, but the king began to stammer. Devayana after proper inquiry came to know that they were her husband's own children by her handmaid. This highly enraged her and without caring to take leave of her husband she at once made for her father's abode and told all about Yayati's secret love. Sukracharya fondly loved his daughter and so when he came to know her distress he cursed Yayati to be overpowered with old age that very moment. Yayati lost his youth and became an ugly-looking, powerless old man, full of unsatiated desire. He craved pardon for his offence; and Sukracharya taking pity upon him gave him the power of exchanging his old age with the youth of any of his children who would be willing to do so. One after another he asked all of his children; all failed to comply with his request except the last one whose name was Puru. Puru gave his youth to his father, and took his old age instead. With the youth of his child the king enjoyed all sorts of pleasures for a thousand years, but at last he found out that his desire for further enjoyment had not abated a little on that account, and his experience taught him that desires are unsatiable. So he took back his old age from his child and returned the latter's youth to him. The celebrated sentiment which he expressed on that occasion is known to all good people even at the present day. He said that the desires are

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in no way allayed by enjoyments, but rather increase more and more even as fire grows by being fed with clarified butter.

This life-history of Yayati clearly proves that if we follow the dictates of our senses we shall never be able to please them. It is not only fruitless to serve a master who is hard to please but also it is very dangerous to serve him. He will never allow you to take a moment's rest, but every hour of the day you will have to be a slave to him. No rest can such a slave ever expect to have; such an abject being can never hope to be master. Unfortunately almost all human beings are such slaves. There are very few, if any here in this world, who do not move at the beck and call of his passions and appetites.

Now we have known the danger and it is our duty to avoid it. He is regarded doubly a fool who, once suffering from a burn, again thrusts his finger willingly into the fire. And are we not all doing the same thing every moment of our life? Naturally we all want to be masters but foolishly we become slaves to our senses. Our natural aspiration to be masters is always kept dead drunk and dormant with the new wine of contact-born pleasure freighted with the misery. Thus we always forget our goal and love to wallow in the mire of false pleasure.

Generally the word "master" is not understood in its higher sense, that is in the sense in which we have

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explained. People understand by the word, a man whom some other men and women serve and follow, assuming that a rich man, a prince, or a king is the real master. A tyrant or a conqueror is regarded by them to be a perfect master. But let us consider how far they are entitled to that name.

A rich man dresses himself well, eats the best things loves to be flattered always, never wants to do any physical or mental work himself, always lazy, vain, overbearing, and commanding, thinks that none in the world is worth measuring swords with, regards himself as a master born to rule the world and therefore cannot bear to be contradicted in the least. Such a man requires at every step the help of another, which he can procure by means of his wealth. Left to himself this man is as helpless and ignorant as a baby which requires always a looking after. As a baby depends for its protection and existence upon some one else, so a rich man's existence fully depends upon others. In Northern India there was a very rich Nawab. He ruled over a vast tract of land. People around used to talk about his wealth and luxury everywhere. Some people were accordingly tempted to attack him and rob him of his property and a mere pretext was necessary to bring about a quarrel. In the quarrel that ensued the enemies gained the day ; they all entered the palace, and wanted to imprison the Nawab. The Nawab was in the meantime

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forsaken by all his servants and retainers. No sooner did they see that the Goddess of Fortune had given up their employer and master, than they ran away in all directions for their own safety. The Nawab too could easily make his escape, because he had a private door at one corner of his parlour where he was sitting. And he wanted to do so. So he called out his servants to help him put on his shoes, but no one was near. The poor fellow did not know how to put on his shoes even or could not take the trouble of doing so, and so he remained rivetted to his seat in the parlour as it were; and the enemy soon entered it and imprisoned the Nawab. Should we debase the word "master" by applying it to such an abject slave? His slaves were much stronger than he was, for they could effect their escape while he depending upon them for the most trifling things was virtually a slave to those slaves. We are apt to regard a rich man as a master and his retainers as his servants, but in reality the servants are the true masters and the so-called master is a slave to them. What is true of a rich man is also true of a prince or a king, for they belong to the same class. Now take the case of a great conqueror. He cannot be accused of laziness. He marches at the head of a large army and conquers one country after another, he has no time even for rest. Thousands of men are ready to die at his command; should we not call such a man a

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master? Is he not born to rule the world? Conquerors like Napoleon and Alexander the Great were all self-reliant, and never trusted themselves wholly to the care of their men. They were never fond of luxuries but were always active and bold. Should we not regard such great men as masters? In answer we should say that as much as they were self-helping so much they were really masters, for a man who never looks to another for help is strong enough in himself to resist whatever may come in his way to baffle him. But so long as a man wants anything he cannot properly be called a master. He is still in want because he has not enough. He should be properly called a master who has got enough for himself as well as to spare for others, who wants nothing here on this earth, who is always full like the ocean which does not suffer in any way because the sun takes away tons of water daily from it.

Once upon a time a Sanyasin came to the court of a king. He was very majestic in his appearance and so learned, so amiable, and humble, so independent and fearless that the king could not help admiring and revering him. So the latter requested him to accept his hospitality for a few days. Seeing the king very anxious to have him as his guest, the kind-hearted hermit could not refuse the hospitality so freely and lovingly offered, and stayed for a few days with him. The king one day

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asked the Sanyasin to take something from him in token of his love towards him. The Sanyasin agreed to do so after two or three days. On that day, as he was sitting in his closet, he heard the king praying to God in the next room. In his prayer the king begged of God in this way. "O God, let me have children, let my kingdom increase in bulk, let my enemies alone incur thy displeasure, let me have more wealth," and so on. As soon as the hermit heard this he went up to the king and said that he would go away immediately. The king could not make out the reason of this sudden change in the Sanyasin's mood, and begged of him to enlighten him on the point. The Sanyasin replied: "O Friend, hitherto I thought you were really a king, but now I know you to be a beggar. I do not want to accept anything from a beggar"; and without waiting for any reply the Sanyasin went away.

Really the more a man wants anything the more is he a beggar. How can such a man be called a master? Can a beggar be a master? The more a man wants this thing and that thing the more is he a slave to his senses, to his passions, and appetites, and all your heroes and conquerors are such people. Ambition is their ruling passion. Never satisfied with anything they are always restless. They are worshippers of their own lower selves and do not scruple to deluge the world in blood to satisfy their senses. They are solely ruled by their senses.

HOW TO BE A REAL MASTER

How can such people be entitled to assume the noble title of Master ?

But you may ask, are we in any way different from our senses ? You talk about our higher nature and lower selves, but are we in reality in any way separate from them ? When we taste a sweet mango do we not really enjoy it ? Are we in any way separate from such enjoyments ? We cannot dissociate the idea of self from seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. Can there be sensations without the self ? If there is no self and we are always to be indissolubly connected with our sensations, then who is to see, or hear, or touch, or taste or smell at all ? To answer this we shall have simply to refer to some incidents of our daily experience. When a man relishes a sweet mango he no doubt identifies himself with the enjoyment. His whole mind is concentrated in tasting the mango, and therefore he relishes it. But if his mind is directed to something else, suppose he is engrossed in speculating on an important transaction, the man may eat the very same mango at the time, but he will not much care to know whether that is sweet or sour. He will simply mechanically eat it. All sensations have been described as contact-born. When any of our senses comes in contact with anything external, then alone the perception of that thing is possible. Suppose you look on a picture before you. The image of the picture falls on the retina of your eye and thus

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strikes the optical nerve which carries the impression to the brain centre which in its turn delivers it up to the mind; and then you perceive the picture. But if you are thinking of something else the image of the picture falls on the retina, the nerve carries the impression to the brain centre in vain. You do not perceive the picture although these physical actions are going on, because your mind is otherwise employed. These considerations show that we can easily dissociate our mind from our organs as well as our perceptions. We are altogether different entities from our bodies and our perceptions. Now these sensations and perceptions are either pleasurable or painful and accordingly we court or hate them; and thus desires, appetites and passions, are created in us. So we see that these desires, appetites and passions have their birth in the body and are therefore altogether different from ourselves. Therefore when a man becomes a slave to them he is not a slave to himself but to something else, and so he should be properly called a slave and not a master.

Now, if we analyse our mind, we find it to be made up of thoughts and in analysing these thoughts again we find that they are made up of our perceptions, sensations, and experiences, our desires, passions and appetites all of which have their birth in our senses. So mind also is something which is separate from us. The nature of mind is restlessness. The nature of our pure

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self is calmness, for in it there cannot be any desire, and desire being the cause of all our activities there can be no activity. It is always one and the same. When it identifies itself with the mind then alone it wrongly thinks itself to be active, it wants this thing or that thing, always something better, and forgets its own masterly nature, and thus becomes a slave. Sankara says: "What makes a man worthless and of no consequence? Begging. What makes him great and of consequence? Non-desire and contentment." That discontented man, whether he be a very wealthy man, a prince, a king, or an emperor, is really a slave who has not been able to conquer his desire; and that contented individual whether he may own a cottage or not, whether he may cover his nakedness with a rag or not, whether he can daily procure some wretched food to keep his body and soul together or not, whether the world holds him very light or not, in all cases, reigns supreme over all circumstances, beyond the reach of the havoc of time. He is not mastered by desires, but desires are slaves to him, so they cannot move him. Thousands of rivers may flow into the ocean, but all of them lose themselves in it and it is always the self-same ocean not in any the least puffed up for it. Similarly thousands of desires may flow in that grand individual only to lose themselves. He is always the self-same being, no change can come over him. Such a man is a real master.

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Every one of us is such a master, only through mistake we identify ourselves with the mind and thus think ourselves other than what we are. To dispel this mistake should be the aim of each and every one of us. We must struggle hard and long in the end we are sure to realise our own nature.

“This highest Self cannot be realised by a weak, cowardly man, neither by him who wants in vigilance or right meditation. But by him alone who is strong, and vigilant and meditates and thinks rightly, that highest world of Brahman can be attained.” So to reach that height of a real master, the Vedas advise us to be strong, vigilant, and meditative. We must have strength sufficient to resist all evil temptations. Temptations, some times disguise themselves and assume the form of duties; we must be vigilant enough not to be deluded by those false appearances. Constant meditation on the real nature of our self makes us unmindful of the demands of our senses till at last they demand no more, and confirms the conviction of our masterly nature. Hence we should be always meditative.

Kings and emperors rule this world but for a few days. Their lives are limited and unsafe, their powers are precarious, their enemies are many, their enjoyments are marred by artificiality and formality, their royal and imperial energies are spent up in serving their senses during the few days they are destined

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to be here, and time at last devours them as well as their name and fame. Not such is the case with true Masters. The world is always ruled by such high souls. Instead of being kings and emperors these people prefer the life of abject poverty, and from that apparently lowly condition they rule over monarchs and conquerors. Their lives are not limited, their powers are eternal, their friends comprise the whole world, their bliss is perennial, their energies are always employed for the amelioration of their brother-men. The ancient sages of India used to live in cottages built in the midst of forests. Buddha was walking all over India with his begging bowl in hand preaching to every one his noble doctrine, intended to save people from birth, disease, old age and death. Jesus Christ had not a stone to lay his head upon. He was like the birds of the air neither sowing nor reaping. He did not care to know where he was to get his next meal from. Sri Chaitanya had the sky for his roof and the earth for his bed. And so also had Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhwacharya, Nanak and many others who are the virtual rulers of the world. The paths which they have laid down are followed by all humanity. Those paths alone can lead us to the realisation of our real nature. Dear friends, if you want to be real masters, serve and follow one of these great Masters, and you are sure to be like one of them at last.

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“Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us
Foot-prints on the sands of time,—
Foot-prints that, perhaps another,
Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing shall take heart again.”



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